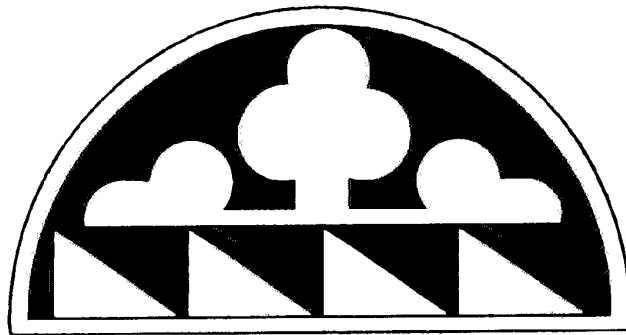# FULFILLING THE PROMISE

ACTION AGENDA FOR MARYLAND'S MINORITY STUDENTS:
THE MATRIX FRAMEWORK

FOLLOW-UP TO
EXECUTIVE SUMMIT ON
MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT IN MARYLAND

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
ACHIEVEMENT INITIATIVE FOR MARYLAND'S MINORITY STUDENTS

2001 – 2002

Maryland State Board of Education
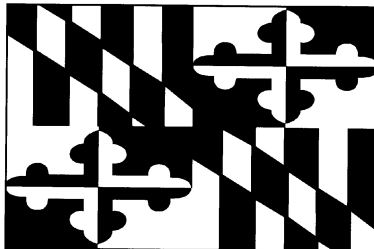
Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students (AIMMS) Steering Committee

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Mr. Dunbar Brooks
Dr. Jacqueline Brown
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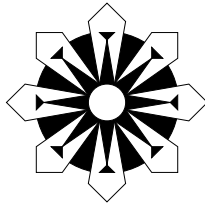
Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students (AIMMS) Council

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FULFILLING THE PROMISE

ACTION AGENDA FOR MARYLAND'S MINORITY STUDENTS: THE MATRIX FRAMEWORK

"What about the children?" We are all responsible to answer that question. For ultimately, all children are our responsibility. Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

"The achievement gap appears in three iterations. First, there is the gap between some students. Next, there is the gap between some students and standards. Then, and most insidious, there is the gap between students and their potential not realized."

<div align="right">
Definition of the "achievement gap" posed by
the AIMMS Steering Committee
</div>

To assist school systems throughout the state in their efforts to address academic achievement among minority and poor students, the Maryland State Department of Education and the Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students (AIMMS) Steering Committee hosted a second summit at the University of Maryland College Park Conference Center on November 7, 2001. This summit succeeded the first Executive Summit held in 1999 and again brought together leaders in education, government, business, community, and parent and student groups from throughout Maryland to dialog about critical issues relevant to achievement disparities. The summit provided a forum for participants to share information related to educational progress and the status of minority students. The summit also furnished representatives from various counties to identify obstacles that they currently confronted in attempting to resolve the problem. Of key importance, the concept of the "Matrix" as a tool for instituting measures to increase achievement among students was introduced to participants.

The materials presented in this text are intended to help local education leaders and other stakeholders in the further development and alignment of efforts to address existing "achievement gaps." This publication describes the *Fulfilling the Promise II: The Action Agenda*, the 2001 Executive Summit on Minority Achievement in Maryland. It also contains information related to using force field analysis to deal with obstacles encountered in addressing minority achievement. Finally, it details an approach to help educational leaders, policy makers, and planners focus on aspects of the minority achievement issue from multiple perspectives simultaneously and establish action agendas to resolve the problem.

Part I:
Fulfilling the Promise II: The Executive Summit

Executive Summit Goals

This summit was the first installment of a series of working conferences to provide technical assistance to local schools systems, institutions of higher education (IHE), and other key stakeholders charged with providing all Maryland public school students quality schooling to meet Maryland's objective of eliminating the poverty and race achievement gaps in the next five years. At this Executive Summit, participants were provided:

- The latest research on Maryland's minority student achievement reported in AIMMS' (2001) *Maryland Minority Achievement at the Millennium.*
- A demonstration of identifying areas of intervention and strategies required to eliminate the poverty and race achievement gaps using the *AIMMS Action Agenda for Accelerating Student Achievement and Eliminating the Poverty and Race Gaps.*
- Technical assistance for developing an action agenda to identify areas of intervention and strategies required to eliminate the poverty and race achievement gaps.

The Problem Statement:
Accelerating All Students' Achievement &
Eliminating the Achievement Gap

Despite the significant improvements in Maryland public schools, Maryland schools continue to be plagued by the achievement gap between the poor and minority students and their more affluent and white students. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has taken leadership in targeting the elimination of the achievement gap in the next five years as the state's #1 priority.

Participants at the Summit received a briefing on the current status of achievement among minority students throughout Maryland as well as an explanation of MSDE's "Design for Success" strategy and technical assistance activities. The following pages contain slides from the presentation. (See Appendix for executive summary of Maryland's 1998-2001 reports on minority achievement.)

EXECUTIVE SUMMIT ON

MINORITY STUDENT

ACHIEVEMENT

Fulfilling the Promise II...

the Action Agenda

Minority Achievement in Maryland at the Millennium

Maryland State Department of Education

Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students (AIMMS) Steering Committee

Key Components of Report

The Report provides state and local level information, including critical school performance and policy issues.

- State level information and analysis of key areas
- School system level data
- Dialog and discussion guide

Presentation Overview

- Maryland Public School Profile
- Why We Care
- School Performance
- Teachers Make a Difference
- Recommendations

Maryland Public School Profile

Maryland Public School Enrollment
1999-2000

Legend:
- White
- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic

4% 4%

4%

37%   55%
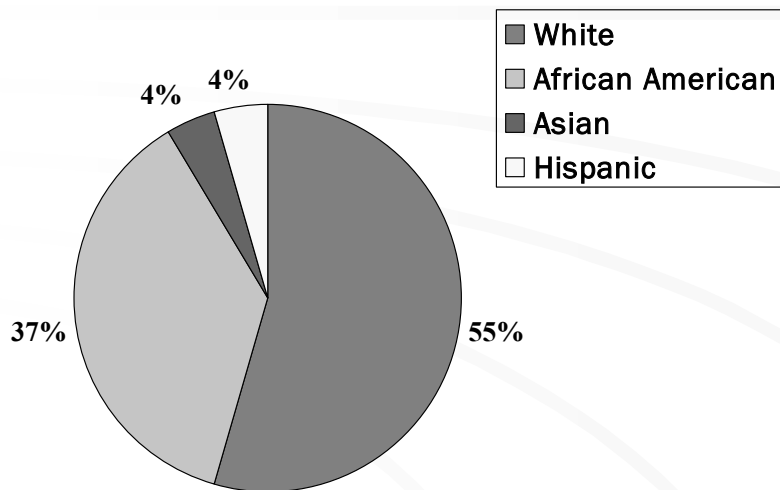
Note: African American enrollment increased .4% over last year.

*Native American population is less than 1%

Minority Enrollment Growth
1993-1999
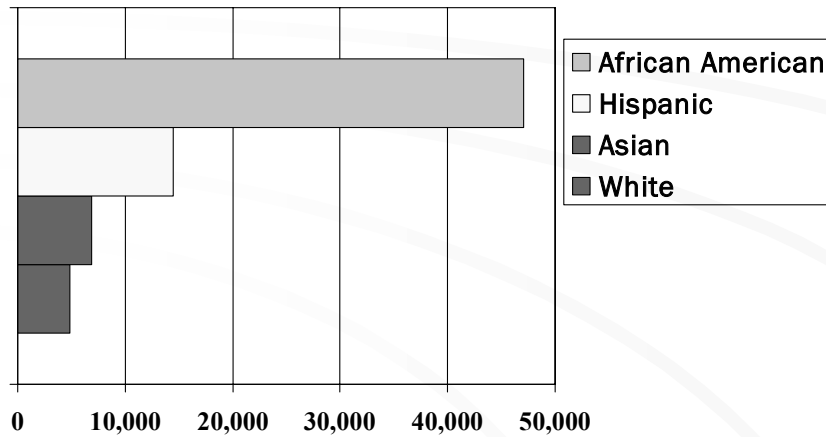
The Other Diversity Factor

POVERTY

Growth of FRPM Students and Total Enrollment 1990-1997
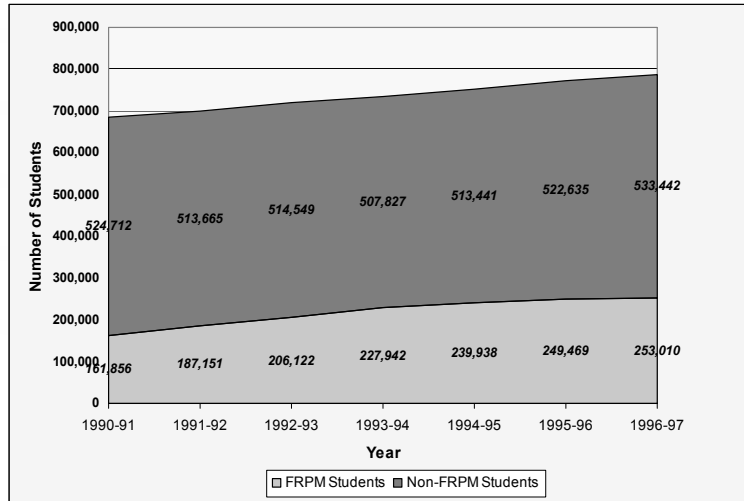
Child Poverty Rate by Education of Parent(s) in 1995
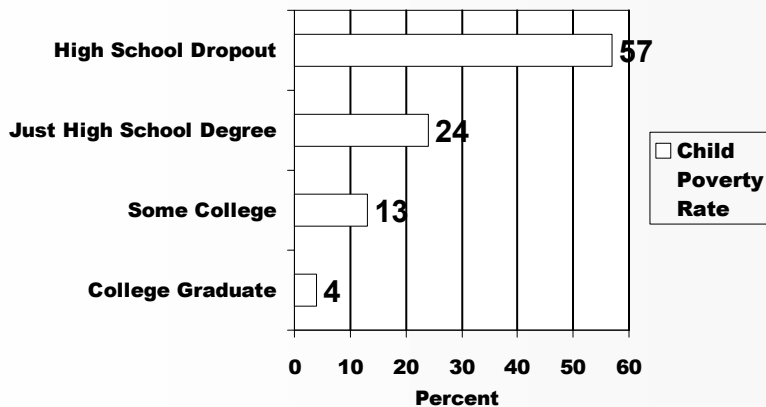
SOURCE: Annie E. Casey's Special Tabulation of U.S. Census Bureau, March 1996 Current Population Survey

Minority Achievement:
Why We Care

- Moral Imperative

- Economic Necessity

- Individual Opportunity

School Performance

Attendance Rates by Race

% of students attending school

	Grades 1-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Asian	96.9	97	95.3
White	95.7	94.6	93.2
Hispanic	95.1	94.3	92.3
African American	94.9	92.1	88.1

100 — 80
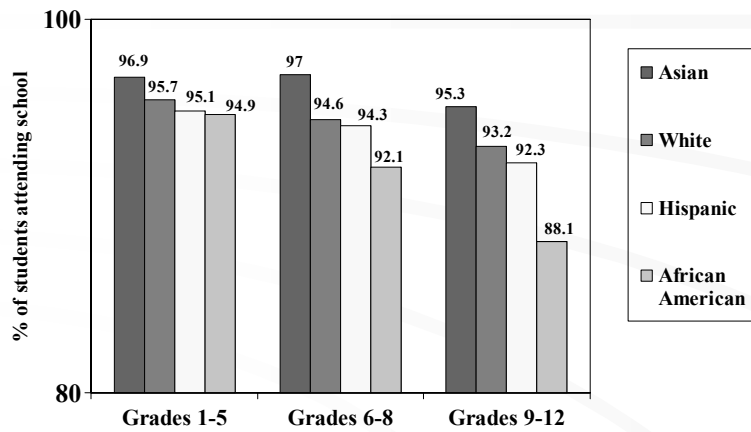
Maryland Suspensions by Race
1998-1999

- White
- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic

42%

54%

3%

1%
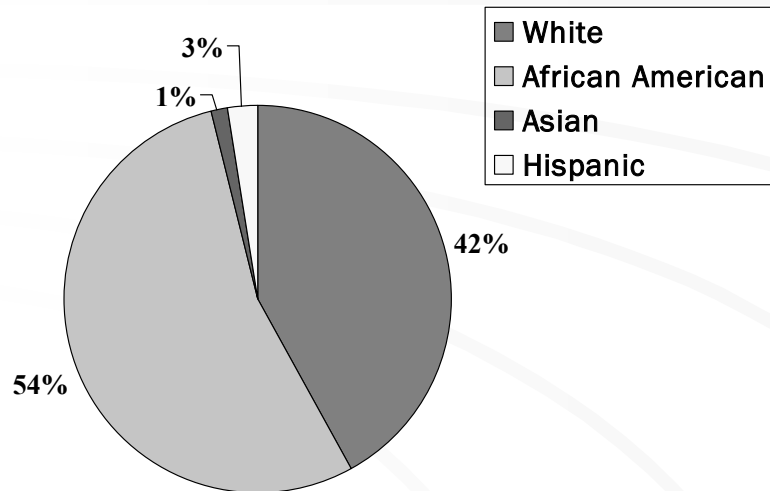
*Native American rate is less than 1%

Maryland Dropouts by Race
2000

Percent of Students Dropping Out

- Native Amer. — 5.26
- African American — 5.23
- Hispanic — 3.42
- White — 3.29
- Asian — 1.44
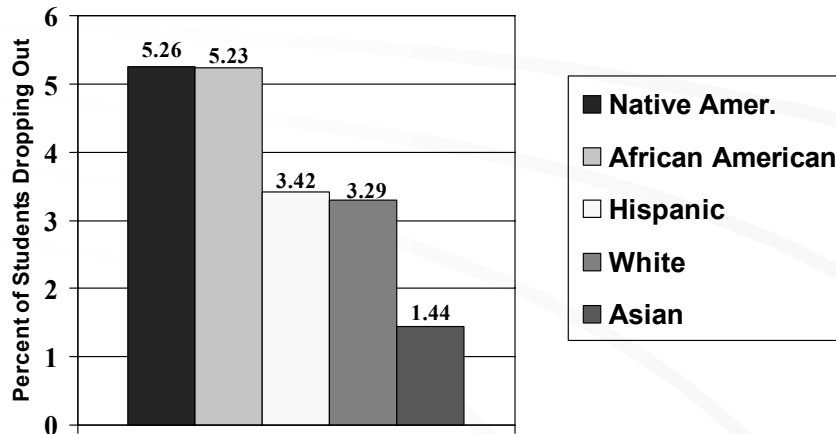
% of All Special Education Students by Race
1998-1999

- White — 52%
- African American — 38%
- Asian — 2%
- Hispanic — 4%
- Native American — 4%

Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP)

2000 Composite Index

Legend:
- Asian
- White
- Hispanic
- Native American
- African American
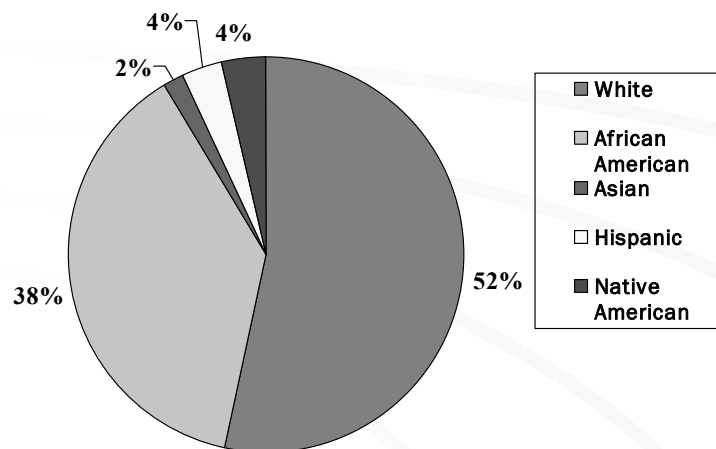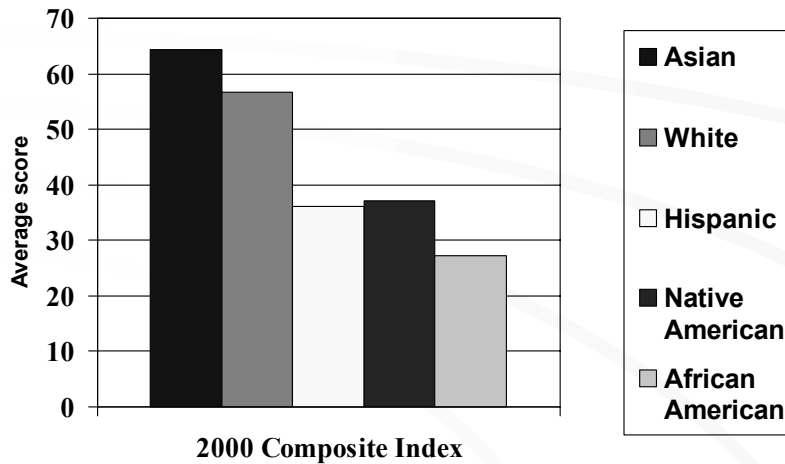
MSPAP State Composite
FARM vs. Non-FARM
Grade 5, Males

Legend:
- Asian
- White
- Hispanic
- African American

11
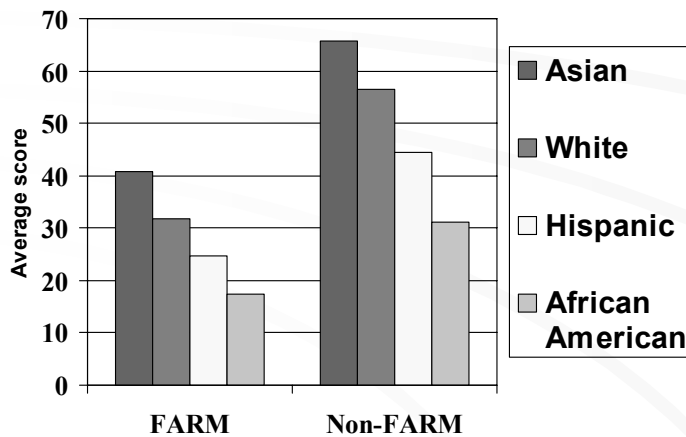
State Level CTBS/5 - Spring 1999
National Percentile Ranks

	Asian/Pacific Islander		African American		White		Hispanic	
	Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
Grade 2								
Reading	50	52	26	36	59	66	30	30
Mathematics	63	44	22	23	63	59	17	16
Grade 4								
Reading	66	78	27	39	57	66	38	55
Mathematics	67	76	25	27	68	62	45	48
Grade 6								
Reading	62	64	26	39	61	68	39	41
Mathematics	85	76	21	29	68	66	49	50

Children Entering School Ready to Learn
(Percent of Students)

Race/Ethnicity	Full	Approaching	Developing
American Indian/Alaskan Native	40.0	53.0	7.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	44.8	47.4	7.8
African American	28.4	58.8	12.8
White	48.1	45.5	6.3
Hispanic	31.1	51.5	17.4
Gender			
Male	34.5	53.8	11.7
Female	46.0	46.7	7.3

Seven Readiness Domains: Social and Personal, Language and Literacy, Mathematical Thinking, Scientific Thinking, Social Studies, Physical Development, The Arts

MSPAP* Percent Satisfactory
Race/Ethnicity by Sex by FARMS Status

GRADE 3	FARMS	Reading		Mathematics	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
African-American	Yes	15.19	21.96	14.06	15.56
	No	28.50	39.31	25.51	28.92
White	Yes	30.68	37.23	32.80	31.81
	No	51.12	61.23	55.00	57.14

*1999 Results

Maryland SAT Scores
2000
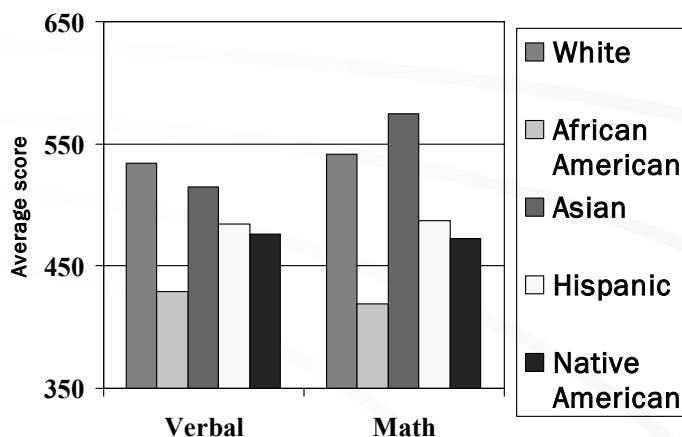
Source: The College Board, 1999

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AP Testing

Test Takers
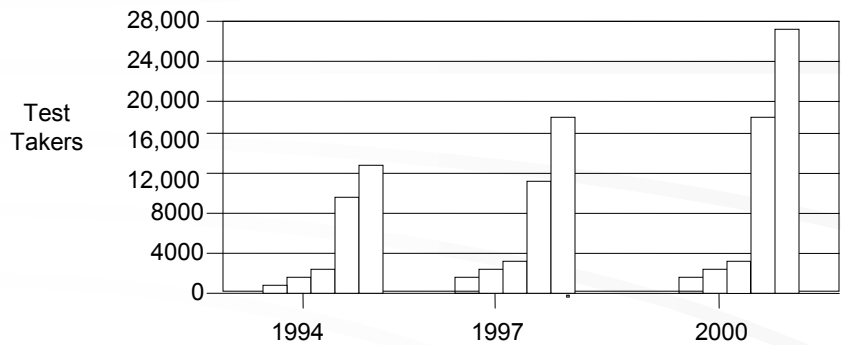
	1994	1997	2000
Hispanic	277	542	881
African-American	785	1,291	2,194
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,921	2,409	3,949
White (not of Hispanic origin)	8,397	11,572	18,345
Unreported	1,092	1,806	1,588
Maryland Totals	12,498	17,677	27,053

Hispanic

African American

Asian/Pacific Islander

White (Not of Hispanic Origin)

Maryland Totals

WHAT MATTERS?

GENDER matters!

INCOME matters!

RACE matters!

Teachers Matter!

Teachers Make a Difference

- Preparation of new teachers

- Professional development of current work force

- Distribution of effective teachers

Experienced Teachers and School Performance

Groups (Average % Non-tenured Teachers)

Group	% at satisfactory on MSPAP, 1997	% FARM students 1997	% minority students, 1997
Group 1 (10.6%)	47.6	23.7	34.7
Group 2 (21.5%)	33	43.4	58.6
Group 3 (31.1%)	26.8	54.6	72.5
Group 4 (46.0%)	22.7	62.2	78.3
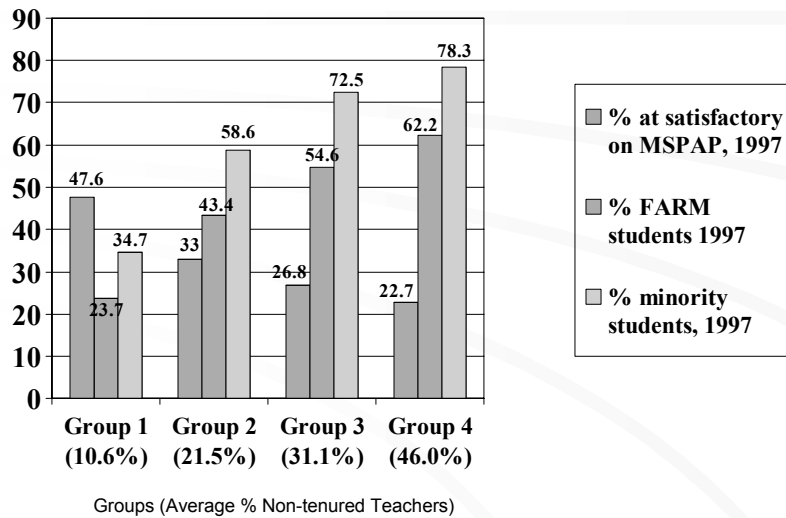
THE GAP

- Competition
- Standards

PROGRESS MADE!

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

The Alignment of Shared Responsibility

- Governor
- General Assembly
- State Board of Education
- Maryland Dept. of Education
- Local Boards of Education
- Higher Education Institutions
- Faith Community

- Local School Systems
- Teachers Associations
- Local Governments
- Parent Organizations
- Community Groups
- Businesses
- Families and Students

Recommendations

Data collection and use

- Enhance state capacity

- Teacher-student links

- Establish task force

Recommendations

Effective teachers and administrators

- Recruitment and retention
- Assignment and transfer
- Rewards and incentives
- Quality professional development

Recommendations

Prevention and Intervention

- Fully fund and deploy *Every Child Achieving.*
- Improve access to rigorous curriculum.
- Address over-identification of students in special education.

"We are one, our cause is one, and we must help each other, if we are to succeed."

Frederick Douglass, 1847

MSDE-AIMMS AWARENESS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SCHEDULE
2001-02 SCHOOL YEAR

Activity	Goals
Local Superintendents Monthly Meetings – September 2001 through June 2002	Review State goal to eliminate the achievement gap within five years
	Review State strategic plan and ongoing progress
University of Maryland College Park Fall Colloquium Series – October - December	Institute for Minority Achievement and Urban Education
	Achievement – A Shared Imperative
	Current research and effective practices
MABE Conference - October 2001	Knowledge of blue book and all recommendations
	Board commitment to participate in long-range plan
	Invite participation in Summit – November 7, 2001
Summit -- November 2001	Impress to key stakeholders the urgency of problem and that local school systems must set goals
	Present the Agenda Framework for Change
March 2002 and May 2002	Two State workshops to provide consultation and technical assistance to local school systems in plan development
	Monitor programs of development of aligned strategic plans
University of Maryland College Park- June 2002	Institute for Minority Achievement and Urban Education- Inaugural Conference
September 2002	State and local school system(s) aligned-strategic plans implemented

Maryland's Academic Acceleration Plan for All Students
A Design for Success

```
┌─────────────────┐                    ┌─────────────────┐
│    Maryland     │                    │  Maryland State │
│  Association of │ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ │    Board of     │
│   Boards of     │                    │   Education     │
│   Education     │                    │                 │
└─────────────────┘                    └─────────────────┘
                                              │
                                       ┌──────────────────┐
                                       │      State       │
                    ┌ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ │  Superintendent  │ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┐
                    │                  │ Maryland State   │
         ┌──────────────┐             │  Department of   │      ┌──────────┐
         │   PreK-16    │             │   Education      │      │  AIMMS   │
         │ Partnership  │             └──────────────────┘      │ Council  │
         └──────────────┘                                       └──────────┘
                    │              ┌──────────────┐                   │
                    │              │    Data      │                   │
                    │              │  Workgroup   │             ┌──────────────┐
         ┌──────────────────┐     └──────────────┘             │   AIMMS      │
         │      MSDE        │ ─ ─                         ─ ─ ─ │  Steering    │
         │  Executive Team  │      ─ ─                 ─ ─      │  Committee   │
         │  Strategic Plan  │           ┌──────────────┐       └──────────────┘
         └──────────────────┘           │    ETMA      │
              Aligned   Technical       │   Network    │
              Plans    Assistance  Shared └──────────────┘
                                  Results
         ┌──────────────────┐
         │  Local School    │
         │    System        │
         │ Strategic Plans  │
         └──────────────────┘
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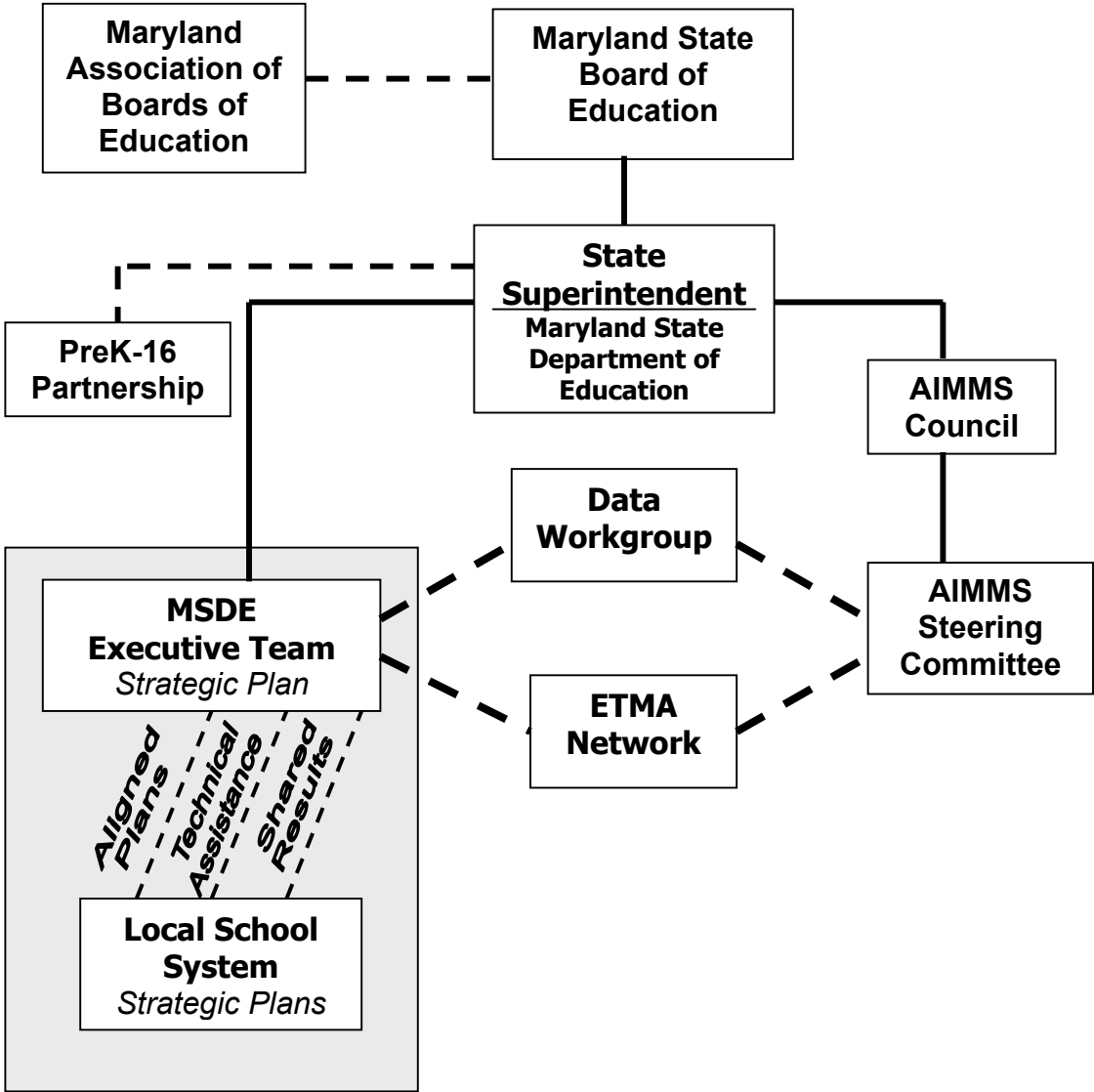
AIMMS – Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students
ETMA – Education That Is Multicultural and Achievement Network

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Part II:
The Matrix Framework:
Setting the Action Agenda

"There is no silver bullet. Nor, should the Action Agenda be used to prolong a 'blame game.' The Matrix is a tool for obtaining real-time perspective on our shared roles in combating the achievement gaps. No one person can close the gaps; it con only be done through collaborative, concerted efforts involving multiple stakeholders and leadership at multiple levels."

Mr. Dunbar Brooks, AIMMS Steering Committee

Presentation of the Matrix Framework and a follow-up panel discussion were central events during the Summit. The main objective here was to present the *AIMMS Action Agenda for Accelerating Student Achievement and Eliminating the Poverty and Race Gaps*:

      A.   To identify key areas of intervention related to achievement gaps.

      B.   To provide the participants insight into multiple stakeholders perspectives of on their roles in developing an action agenda.

The following section features slides from the Matrix Framework presentation, explanations about the concept, and suggestions for use of the Framework.

The Matrix Framework for Accelerating Achievement Among Maryland's Minority Students

AIMMS Steering Committee

1 November 2001

To be presented at the Executive Summit on Minority Achievement, 7 November 2001.

We will dramatically increase minority achievement if . . .

→ multiple agents

→ focus or align their efforts

→ to employ seven powerful strategies

→ in coordinated ways

→ to change conditions that maintain the status quo with respect to achievement.

Purposes of the Framework

- Focus efforts on arrangements most likely to pay off in greater minority achievement
- Direct the attention of multiple agents to <u>their own</u> roles in improving achievement
- Encourage the alignment of school and school system programs and reforms on objectives linked to minority achievement

Seven Key Intervention Strategies

- Recruit, select and retain personnel who can deliver high quality instruction
- Provide equitable and wide-spread access to appropriate high-level educational opportunities
- Base decisions on data when pursuing achievement for all students at all educational levels

Seven Key Intervention Strategies
(Continued)

- Prepare and continually re-train teachers and administrators
- Provide quality preschool preparation for school
- Identify any student who falls behind -- and intervene appropriately
- Commit students, parents, teachers, administrators, board members, and legislators to high levels of academic achievement for all groups of students

Intervention Strategy 1. Recruit, select, and retain personnel who can deliver high quality instruction and rapidly learn to deploy improved instructional methods.

- Recruitment, selection and retention of high quality educators is especially difficult in schools serving minority and less affluent populations
- Ratios of applicants to hires are too low
- Rates of voluntary transfer of educators out of schools serving minority and less affluent students are too high

Intervention Strategy 2. Provide equitable and wide-spread access to appropriate high-level educational opportunities.

- Increase the number and percentage of minority youths participating in gifted and talented programs at all levels (and in advanced placement courses in high schools)
- Eliminate disparities in access to advanced mathematics and other courses that prepare students for college and careers requiring complex skills
- Eliminate barriers to preparatory classes for advanced study

Intervention Strategy 3. Use data-based feedback on educational outcomes for <u>all</u> students at <u>all</u> levels of educational systems.

- Set goals for the educational outcomes of <u>all groups</u> of students at <u>all educational levels</u>
- Monitor progress for students of all ethnic groups and of both sexes
- Use data to identify the strengths and weaknesses of educational systems, schools, and individual teachers' practices
- Use data to verify improvements in these systems, schools, and practices (and stimulate problem solving if they do not)

Intervention Strategy 4. Produce well prepared teachers and administrators and continually re-train them.

- Prepare beginning teachers to provide high quality instruction to all ethnic groups in teacher training institutions
- Provide continuing professional development to prepare practicing educators to serve Maryland's increasingly diverse population

Intervention Strategy 5. Enroll economically disadvantaged students in quality preschool programs to set the stage for high achievement in subsequent years.

- Ethnic minority and children of economically disadvantaged families should no longer start school with an educational disadvantage
- Quality preschool preparation focusing on economically disadvantaged children should attend to
  - Language and cognitive development
  - Behavioral health
  - Nutrition and other aspects of physical health

Intervention Strategy 6. Identify students who fall behind ─ and intervene appropriately.

- Frequently assess educational progress to identify individuals who are not performing up to potential with respect to achievement, attendance, and school performance
- Avoid inappropriate assignment of ethnic minorities to special education categories by using diagnostic processes that distinguish learning disabilities from cultural differences
- Respond in a timely fashion with learning interventions that accelerate minority achievement

Intervention Strategy 7. Responsible parties commit to high levels of academic achievement for all groups of students.

- **Students** must dedicate themselves to educational effort over a period of many years
- **Parents** must attend to young peoples' educational effort and reward effort with approval
- **Teachers** must resolve that minority children will achieve at high levels in their classes and conduct instruction accordingly

Intervention Strategy 7 (Continued). Responsible parties commit to high achievement for all groups.

- **Administrators** must lead schools and school systems in planning for greater achievement, arrange training for staff, and supervise personnel to ensure that they act to bring about achievement goals
- **Board members** must emphasize minority achievement in selecting and overseeing the work of administrators and in allocating resources
- **State policy makers** and **legislators** must demand equity, provide resources, and align efforts of multiple actors towards our common goal

Multiple Actors Share Responsibility for Improving Minority Achievement

Multiple Actors Share Responsibility for Improving Minority Achievement

- Students
- Parents and PTAs
- Teachers and teachers' unions
- Local administrators and school principals
- Sate and local boards of education and CACs
- State administrators
- Teacher training institutions
- Research institutions
- Courts
- Legislators
- Faith and business communities

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement

Strategy	Responsible party										
	Students	Parents & PTAs	Teachers & unions	Local administrators	School boards	State administrators	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Business & faith communities
Personnel & instruction											
Equitable access											
Using data											
Teacher preparation											
Preschool											
Identification & intervention											
Commitment to achievement											

Illustrations of Actions <u>Students</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement

Inter-vention Strategy	Responsible party										
	Stu-dents	Parents & PTAs	Tea-chers & unions	Local admin-istrators	School boards	State adminis trators	Teacher training institu-tions	Research institu-tions	Courts	Legisla-tors	Business & faith commu-nities
Personnel & instruc-tion											
Equitable access	●										
Using data	●										
Teacher prepara-tion											
Preschool											
Identifica-tion & interven-tion											

Plan, prepare for, and enroll in high-level courses.

Participate wholeheartedly in assessment programs. Analyze implications of results for own learning.

Illustrations of Actions <u>Parents</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement

Inter-vention Strategy	Responsible party										
	Stu-dents	Parents & PTAs	Tea-chers & unions	Local admin-istrators	School boards	State adminis trators	Teacher training institu-tions	Research institu-tions	Courts	Legisla-tors	Business & faith commu-nities
Personnel & instruc-tion											
Equitable access		●									
Using data		●									
Teacher prepara-tion											
Preschool											
Identifica-tion & interven-tion											

Advise children to tackle tough courses. Advocate for children's placement.

Review own child's progress; help child plan for advancement.

Illustrations of Actions <u>Teachers</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement

Intervention Strategy	Responsible party										
	Students	Parents & PTAs	Teachers & unions	Local administrators	School boards	State administrators	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Business & faith communities
Personnel & instruction											
Equitable access			●								
Using data			●								
Teacher preparation											
Preschool											
Identification & intervention											

Treat students equitably in classes and in access to classes. Prepare self to teach high level material.

Analyze assessment results to identify where instructional changes would be beneficial. Support innovative accountability systems.

Illustrations of Actions <u>Principals & Local Administrators</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement

Intervention Strategy	Responsible party										
	Students	Parents & PTAs	Teachers & unions	Local administrators	School boards	State administrators	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Business & faith communities
Personnel & instruction				●							
Equitable access				●							
Using data											
Teacher preparation				●							
Preschool											
Identification & intervention											

Select high quality teachers. Supervise teachers. Assign best teachers where most needed.

Treat students equitably in access to classes.

Arrange for periodic continuing education.

Illustrations of Actions <u>Boards of Education</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement

Intervention Strategy	Students	Parents & PTAs	Teachers & unions	Local administrators	School boards	State administrators	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Business & faith communities
Personnel & instruction					●						
Equitable access											
Using data					●						
Teacher preparation					●						
Preschool											
Identification & intervention											

Select administrators dedicated to improving minority achievement.

Include assessment of minority achievement in review of administrators' performance.

Require continuing education in multicultural education and in areas of instructional needs.

Illustrations of Actions <u>State Administrators</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement

Intervention Strategy	Students	Parents & PTAs	Teachers & unions	Local administrators	School boards	State administrators	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Business & faith communities
Personnel & instruction						●					
Equitable access						●					
Using data						●					
Teacher preparation											
Preschool											
Identification & intervention											

Promulgate regulations, seek funding, lead parties to consensus.

Hold LEAs accountable for equitable access and provision of high level instruction.

Promote availability of appropriate assessment programs. Devise useful test feedback system.

Illustrations of Actions <u>Teacher Training Institutions</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement										
Inter-vention Strategy	Responsible party									
	Stu-dents	Parents &PTAs	Tea-chers & unions	Local admin-istrators	School boards	State adminis trators	Teacher training institu-tions	Research institu-tions	Courts	Legisla-tors	Business &faith commu-nities
Personnel &instruc-tion							●			
Equitable access										
Using data							●			
Teacher prepara-tion							●			
Preschool										
Identifica-tion& interven-tion										

Select and retain talented students and prepare them to educate a diverse population.

Evaluate teacher training programs in terms of educational outcomes of students taught by alumni.

Train beginning teachers to manage instruction in heterogeneous groups and to provide advanced instruction in areas of need.

Illustrations of Actions <u>Research Institutions</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement										
Inter-vention Strategy	Responsible party									
	Stu-dents	Parents &PTAs	Tea-chers & unions	Local admin-istrators	School boards	State adminis trators	Teacher training institu-tions	Research institu-tions	Courts	Legisla-tors	Business &faith commu-nities
Personnel &instruc-tion								●		
Equitable access										
Using data								●		
Teacher prepara-tion								●		
Preschool										
Identifica-tion& interven-tion										

Publish research on teacher selection and effective practices.

Develop improved ways of analyzing outcomes. Devise ways to evaluate instructors and schools.

Evaluate training interventions to determine if they enhance minority achievement.

Illustrations of Actions <u>Courts</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement

Inter-vention Strategy	Responsible party										
	Students	Parents & PTAs	Teachers & unions	Local administrators	School boards	State administrators	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Business & faith communities
Personnel & instruction									●		
Equitable access											
Using data									●		
Teacher preparation											
Preschool									●		
Identification & intervention											

Adjudicate in cases alleging inequity in access to quality teachers.

Adjudicate in cases alleging persistent failure to improve educational outcomes for minorities.

Adjudicate in cases of alleged inequity in access to preschool programs.

Illustrations of Actions <u>Legislators</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement

Inter-vention Strategy	Responsible party										
	Students	Parents & PTAs	Teachers & unions	Local administrators	School boards	State administrators	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Business & faith communities
Personnel & instruction										●	
Equitable access											
Using data										●	
Teacher preparation											
Preschool										●	
Identification & intervention											

Establish programs to attract teachers in areas with poor selection ratios.

Pass legislation (with funding) for assessment programs tracking individual progress and linking it with teachers and classes for evaluating instruction.

Fund preschool programs for economically disadvantaged children.

Illustrations of Actions the <u>Business or Faith Communities</u> Can Take to Improve Achievement

The Concerted Effort of Many Different Actors is Required to Dramatically Improve Minority Achievement										
Inter-vention Strategy	Stu-dents	Parents & PTAs	Tea-chers & unions	Local admin-istrators	School boards	State adminis-trators	Teacher training institu-tions	Research institu-tions	Courts	Legisla-tors	Business & faith commu-nities
Personnel & instruc-tion											●
Equitable access											
Using data											
Teacher prepara-tion											
Preschool											●
Identifica-tion & interven-tion											●

Large enterprises share expertise in personnel recruitment and selection with school systems.

Develop and implement high quality preschool programs focused on pre-literacy skills and integrating health screening.

Use preschool and faith-related early education as vehicles for early behavioral health screening for children.

Where Do We Help Overcome Achievement Disparities?

- Classrooms
- Schools
- Districts
- State

Multiple Locations of Performance Disparities

- **Among students within classes** (effective instructional strategies for all students in the classroom)

- **Among classes within schools** (equitable and effective distribution of teacher talent, resources, and students)

- **Among schools within districts** (equitable and effective allocation of teaching and instructional resources -- and leadership)

- **Among districts within state** (effective legislation, regulation -- and monitoring of practices, resources and outcomes)

Multiple Actors Must Be Aligned Across Multiple Domains to Improve Outcomes for Individuals, Classrooms, Schools, and Districts
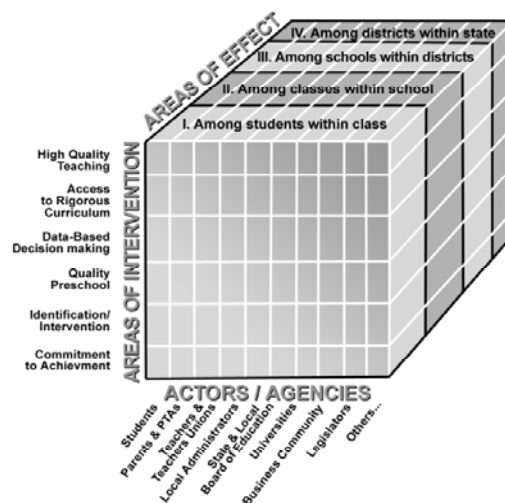
Different Agents Have Different Roles in Addressing Components of Achievement Shortfalls

Agent	Source of discrepancy between performance and standard			
	Among students within classes	Among classes within schools	Among schools within districts	Among districts within state
Students				
Parents and PTAs				
Teachers and teachers' unions				
Local administrators				
State and local boards of education				
State administrators				
Teacher training institutions				
Research institutions				
Courts				
Legislators				
Faith and business communities				

Illustrations of Actions <u>Parents</u> Can Take to Influence Different Components of Achievement Discrepancies

- Among students within classes
  - Communicate and follow-up with teachers
- Among classes within schools
  - Influence children's course selections (advanced/general)
- Among schools within districts
  - Choices of residential location
- Among districts within state
  - Encourage and vote for education expenditures

Illustrations of Ways <u>Teachers & Teachers'</u> <u>Unions</u> Can Influence Different Components of Achievement Discrepancies

- Among students within classes
  - Improve instructional methods or skills
- Among classes within schools
  - Improve teaching competencies
- Among schools within districts
  - Help negotiate rules of assignment and teacher mobility among schools
- Among districts within state
  - Encourage pay incentives for service in underserved communities

Illustrations of Ways <u>Principals and Local</u> <u>Administrators</u> Can Influence Different Components of Achievement Discrepancies

- Among students within classes
  - Arrange training in methods of instruction for heterogeneous classes
- Among classes within schools
  - Make teacher and student assignments; supervise teaching personnel
- Among schools within districts
  - Develop strategies to ensure equitable staffing of schools

Illustrations of Ways <u>Boards of Education</u> Can Influence Different Components of Achievement Discrepancies

- Among classes within schools
  - Set policies regarding tracking, special education, and GT assignments
- Among schools within districts
  - Allocate resources; develop policies for assigning administrators to schools
- Among districts within state
  - Promulgate policies regarding resource and staffing equity; allocate resources

Illustrations of Ways <u>State Administrators</u> Can Influence Different Components of Achievement Discrepancies

- Among students within classes
  - Develop useful data and monitoring systems
- Among classes within schools
  - Develop useful data and monitoring systems
- Among schools within districts
  - Develop useful data and monitoring systems
- Among districts within state
  - Develop useful data and monitoring systems; incentives and sanctions; resource allocation

Illustrations of Ways <u>Teacher Training Institutions</u> Can Influence Different Components of Achievement Discrepancies

- Among students within classes
  - Prepare teachers for coping with student heterogeneity in classes
- Among classes within schools
  - Control the quality and level of preparation of graduates
- Among districts within state
  - Recruit and train students from under-served areas

Illustrations of Ways <u>Research Institutions</u> Can Influence Different Components of Achievement Discrepancies

- Among students within classes
  - Develop improved methods of instruction for all students
- Among classes within schools
  - Develop improved methods of input-output analysis
- Among schools within districts
  - Conduct research on school performance differences
- Among districts within state
  - Partner with districts needing improvement

Illustrations of Ways <u>Legislators</u> Can Influence Different Components of Achievement Discrepancies

- Among districts within state
  - Make provision for equitable funding

Illustrations of Ways the <u>Business and Faith Communities</u> Can Influence Different Components of Achievement Discrepancies

- Among students within classes
  - After school educational assistance programs
- Among classes within schools
  - Teach-ins regarding educational inequities
- Among schools within districts
  - Teach-ins regarding inequities; lobbying for equitable resources
- Among districts within state
  - Teach-ins; lobbying for equitable resources

Summary

- <u>Multiple responsible parties</u> must align their efforts in a comprehensive effort to improve minority achievement
- Employing 7 intervention strategies will improve minority achievement
  - Personnel quality
  - Equitable access to high-level instruction
  - Use of data on outcomes and processes
  - Teacher preparation
  - Quality preschool
  - Appropriate identification and intervention
  - Commitment by multiple parties
- Different actors will be most influential in addressing different sources of achievement shortfalls

"Framework" for the Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students[1]

We will improve academic achievement for Maryland's minority students, increase the proportion of members of all groups who are high achievers, and approach educational equity if we are able to put in place *all* of the following:

1. ***Recruitment, selection, and retention of personnel who can deliver high quality instruction and who can rapidly learn to deploy improved instructional methods***. The recruitment, selection and retention of high quality teachers is especially problematic in schools serving minority and less affluent populations where we observe such things as low ratios of applicants to hires and the voluntary transfer of teachers out of such schools.

2. ***Equitable and wide-spread access to appropriate high-level educational opportunities***. We must increase the number of minority youths participating in gifted and talented programs at all levels and enrolled in advanced placement courses in high schools. Disparities in access to advanced mathematics and other courses that prepare students for college and careers requiring complex skills must be eliminated.

3. ***Data-based feedback on educational outcomes for <u>all</u> students at all levels of educational systems***. Educators at all levels should set goals for the educational outcomes of *all groups* of students and use information from achievement assessments to monitor progress for students of all ethnic groups and of both sexes. Assessment data should be used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of educational systems, schools, and individual teachers' practices and used to improve these systems, schools, and practices.

4. ***Initially well prepared and continually re-prepared (re-trained) teachers and administrators***. To provide high quality instructional services to students of all of Maryland's ethnic groups, educators must not only be initially well prepared as a result of formal education, but they will require continuing professional development to prepare them to serve the state's increasingly diverse population.

5. ***Quality preschool preparation for school.*** Ethnic minority students and children from economically disadvantaged families should no longer start school with an educational disadvantage. High quality preschool preparation, including attention to language and cognitive development, behavioral health, nutrition, and other aspects of physical health – with a focus on economically disadvantaged minority children – will set the stage for high achievement in subsequent years.

6. ***Identification and intervention when any student falls behind expected educational progress***. Frequent assessments of educational progress should be used identify individuals who are not performing up to their potentials with respect to achievement, attendance, or school performance – with appropriate interventions applied in a timely fashion. Diagnostic processes should distinguish learning disabilities from cultural differences so that inappropriate

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[1]AIMMS Steering Committee, Revised November 1, 2001.

assignment of ethnic minorities to special education categories is avoided and so that minority achievement is accelerated by learning interventions.

7. ***Students, parents, teachers, administrators, board members, and legislators are committed to high levels of academic achievement for all groups of students***. The mechanisms that will lead to high levels of achievement for Maryland's minority students – and indeed for all of our students – are complex. High achievement requires hard work, students must dedicate themselves to educational effort over a period of many years. This requires each young person to adopt the personal identity of serious scholar and to set ambitious personal standards for effort and the quality of educational performances. Parents must consistently encourage their children to aim for high educational achievement – not only in the long run but also in their day-to-day undertakings. Regardless of background or level of economic resources, every family must attend to young peoples' educational effort and reward effort with approval. Teachers must resolve that the minority children they teach will achieve at high levels in their classes and conduct their instruction so that this resolve is realized in student outcomes. Administrators must be committed to increasing the achievement of minority and economically disadvantaged students, lead schools and school systems in planning for greater achievement, arrange necessary training for staff, and regularly supervise personnel to see that they are implementing instruction and other activities to bring about the achievement goals. Board members must express their commitment to minority achievement in selecting and overseeing the work of administrators, and in allocating resources to schools and programs. The challenge of eliminating disparities in educational outcomes is great, and it will not be overcome without resolution and resources. We must be able to count on state policy makers and legislators to demand equity, to provide the resources needed to implement all of the above, and to align the efforts of everyone on our common goal.

The matrix provided in Table 1 shows how multiple groups or multiple actors will be required to bring about the success of the Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students. The rows of the matrix correspond to the achievement pathways described above. The columns correspond to the different actors or groups whose effort and commitment is required. The entries in the matrix are *not* exhaustive. Instead they are provided as simple illustrations of the kinds of actions that characterize the cells of the matrix, and to illustrate that success will require the alignment of action by multiple actors directed at minority achievement.

Different actors are positioned to be most effective in different manners, however. For example, parents will be most effective in influencing achievement for their own children via their interaction with their children and their teachers. This is so even though they can also influence minority achievement in less direct ways by helping the school, participating in school board elections, and voting on tax issues. In contrast, the state superintendent of education will seldom have a large influence on educational outcomes for particular students. Instead, she is especially well positioned (along with the state legislators and board of education) to influence the allocation of resources across school districts so that poor performing districts can improve.

Table 2 shows how it may be useful to think of the gap between our achievement goals and the educational achievement of a given minority student as being composed of several distinct components: (a) the gap between average district minority group performance and the state goal for performance, (b) the difference between a schools's average minority student performance and the

district's average minority performance, (c) the difference between the student's class's average minority student performance and the school's average minority performance, and (d) the difference between the individual student's performance and the average performance of others in his or her class. Table 1 shows how different actors may influence each of these components.

Taken together the elements of the Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students framework which is detailed in Tables 1 and 2 form a cube describing the ways we can enhance student achievement. The cube, illustrated in Figure 1 can stimulate thinking and planning for a broad multichannel approach to improving minority achievement. For example, one slice through the cube produces a Table 1 matrix focused on improvement of minority achievement within a classroom. Another slice produces a Table 1 matrix focused on improvement of achievement within a school district. Improvements must be made in each of these slices.

Alignment of efforts to generate high achievement among Maryland's minority students occurs when multiple actors are all doing their part with respect to each domain (quality personnel, equitable high-level opportunity, etc.) and when progress is being made in each domain at each level of education (classroom, school, district, and state).
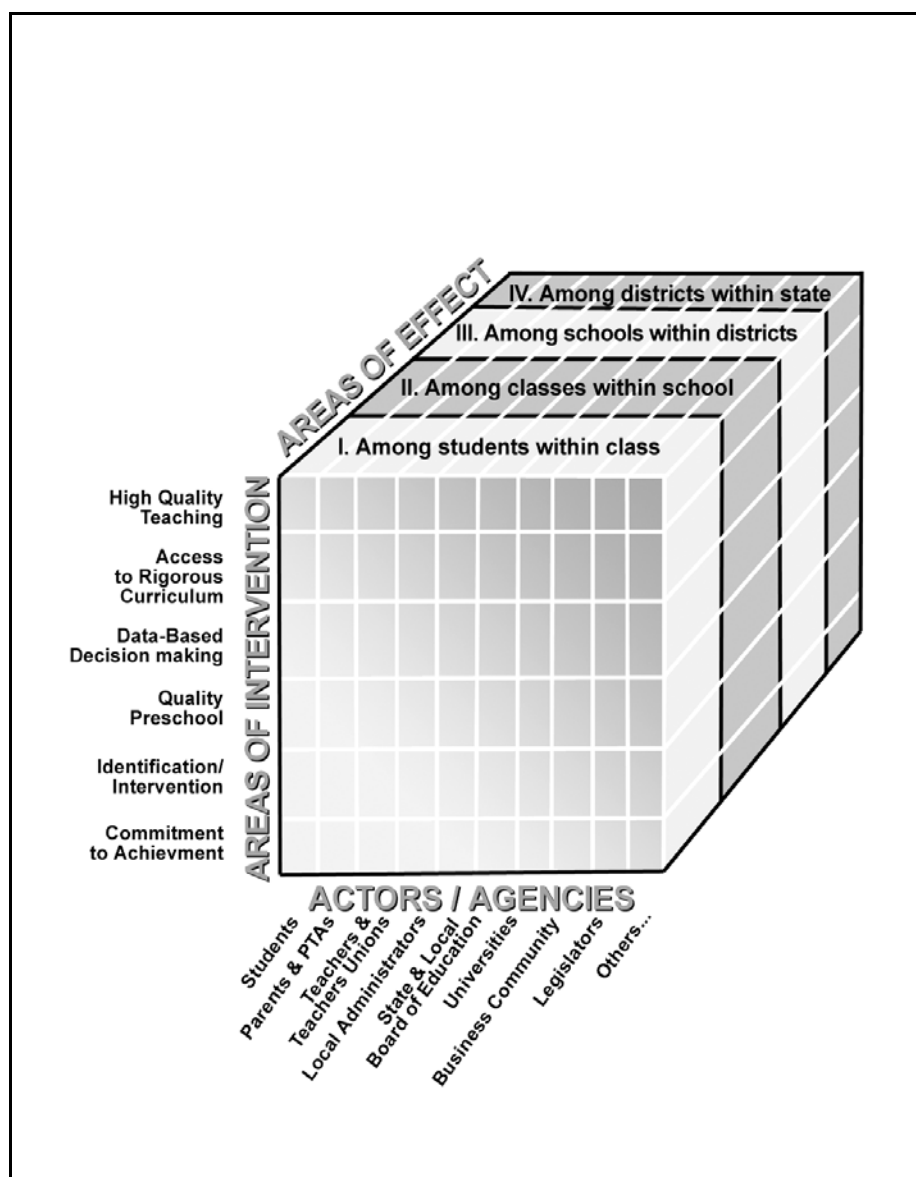
Figure 1. A framework for an Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students showing how efforts of multiple actors must be aligned in multiple domains to improve achievement for individuals, classrooms, schools, and districts. Some rows, columns, and slices omitted to simplify illustration. See Tables 1 and 2 for details.

Table 1

The Concerted Efforts of Many Different Actors is Required in the Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students

Approach to enhancing minority achievement	Participant										
	Students	Parents and PTAs	Teachers and teachers' unions	School principals and other local administra-tors	Local and state boards of education and CACs	State administra-tors	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Faith community and business community
Quality personnel and instruction	Treat educators with respect so that good personnel are easier to retain.	Advocate and vote for personnel resources.	Able and dedicated persons make career choices in education.	Select and supervise teachers. Assign best teachers where needed most.	Select administra-tors dedica-ted to improving minority achieve-ment.	Promulgate regulations, seek funding, lead parties to consensus.	Select and retain talented students and prepare them to educate a diverse population.	Publish research on teacher selection and effective practices.	Adjudicate in cases alleging inequity in access to quality personnel.	Establish programs to attract teachers in areas with poor selection ratios.	Major industries share expertise in personnel recruitment & selection with schools.
Equitable high-level opportunity	Plan for, prepare selves for, and enroll in high-level courses.	Advise their children to tackle tough courses; advocate for childrens' placement.	Treat students equitably in classes and access to classes. Prepare self to teach high level material.	Treat students equitably in access to classes. Recruit personnel who can deliver high level instruction.	Demand equitable access to advanced instruction.	Hold LEAs accountable for equitable access and provision of high level instruction.	Through initial and programs of continuing study pre-pare teachers serving minority populations for AP instruction.	Conduct research on equity of access to GT and AP courses.	Adjudicate in cases alleging inequity in access to advanced courses.	Fund training for educators to deliver high level courses. Legislate on equity of access.	Conduct teach-ins on current inequities.
Feedback on outcomes	Participate whole heartedly in assessment programs. Analyze implications of results for own learning.	Review own child's progress; help child plan for advance-ment.	Analyze assessment results to identify where instructional changes would be beneficial. Support innovative accountabili-ty systems.	Analyze assessment results as part of performance review for staff and to identify areas where instructional changes would be beneficial.	Include assessment of minority achievement in review of administra-tors' perfor-mance.	Promote the availability of appropriate assessment materials and programs. Devise useful test feedback system.	Evaluate teacher training programs in terms of educational outcomes of students taught by alumni.	Develop improved ways of analyzing outcomes. Devise ways to evaluate instructors and schools in relation to expected educational growth.	Adjudicate in cases alleging persistent failure to improve educational outcomes for minorities.	Pass legislation (with funding) for assessment programs tracking individual progress and linking it with teachers and classes experienced.	Sponsor events in which assessment data become the focus of community planning to improve education.

Table 1 (Continued)

Approach to enhancing minority achievement	Students	Parents and PTAs	Teachers and teachers' unions	School principals and other local administrators	Local and state boards of education and CACs	State administrators	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Faith community and business community
					Participant						
Teacher preparation and re-training			Diligently learn classroom management and instructional methods.	Arrange for periodic continuing education in areas of need.	Require continuing education in multicultural education and in areas of instructional need.		Train beginning teachers for managing instruction in heterogenous groups and to provide advanced instruction in areas of need.	Conduct process and outcome evaluations of training interventions to determine if they enhance minority achievement.		Create scholarship programs, training programs, focused on preparing teachers to instruct economically handicapped or minority students.	Develop recognition programs for outstanding examples of teacher preparation and re-training.
Preschool preparation		Meet the health, mental health, and cognitive needs of children. Develop emergent literacy skills.	Advocate for quality preschool programs.	Administer preschool programs focusing on early educational readiness of minority children.			Train preschool educators to introduce literacy skills to minority or poor children.	Conduct process and outcome evaluations of preschool programs to determine if they enhance minority achievement.	Adjudicate in cases of alleged inequity in access to preschool programs.	Fund preschool programs for minority or economically handicapped children.	Develop and implement high quality preschool programs focused on pre-literacy skills and integrating health screening.

Table 1 (Continued)

Approach to enhancing minority achievement	Participant										
	Students	Parents and PTAs	Teachers and teachers' unions	School principals and other local administrators	Local and state boards of education and CACs	State administrators	Teacher training institutions	Research institutions	Courts	Legislators	Faith community and business community
Identification and intervention	Ask for help with educational difficulties.	Request assessment of children when difficulties are suspected.	Apply diagnostic processes that distinguish learning disabilities from cultural differences. Conduct instruction matched to diverse student needs.	Review assessment results child by child to identify those who may need intervention.	Require mainstreamed educational interventions for children with special needs.		Train future educators in skills needed to meet diverse student needs in regular or accelerated classes.	Evaluate identification and intervention programs (including special education) to learn effects on minority achievement.		Ensure sufficient funding for training teachers in identification and intervention to accelerate minority achievement.	Use preschool and faith-related early education as vehicles for early behavioral health screening for children.
Commitment to achievement	Set specific difficult achievement goals, make and execute plans to improve achievement. Support a climate of commitment to education.	Reward students for achievement, school attendance, and good school conduct. Encourage high educational goals.	Assist students in setting and achieving difficult goals. Provide incentives for progress towards goals.	Assist teachers and schools set specific, difficult goals for minority achievement. Reward teachers and schools for approaching goals.	Require schools and districts to set specific difficult goals for minority achievement.	Assist districts with a process for setting their own specific difficult goals for minority achievement.	Instill in students enthusiasm for the pursuit of high achievement for minority and economically disadvantaged students.	Conduct research on the process of organizational goal setting and achievement. Study the relation between student, teacher, and educator commitment and student educational outcomes.			Emphasize teachings related to personal commitment and effort as an investment of one's talents.

Table 2
Different Actors or Change Agents Have Special Roles in Addressing Different Components of Achievement Shortfalls

	Source of discrepancy between performance and standard			
Agent	Among students within classes	Among classes within schools	Among schools within districts	Among districts within state
Students	Expenditure effort	Course selections (advanced/general)		
Parents and PTAs	Communication and follow-up with teachers		Choices of residential location; school selection	Choices of residential location
Teachers and teachers' unions	Instructional methods/skills	Teacher competencies; priorities for teaching assignments	Negotiations on rules for assignment and mobility among schools	Encouragement of pay incentives for service in under-served communities
Local administrators	Staff development in methods for instruction of heterogeneous classes	Teacher and student assignments; supervision of teaching personnel	Development of strategies to ensure equitable staffing of schools	
State and local boards of education		Policies regarding tracking, special education, and GT assignments	Resource allocations; assignment of administrators across schools	Resource allocations; policies regarding equity and staffing quality
State administrators	Accountability and monitoring systems	Accountability and monitoring systems	Accountability and monitoring systems	Resource allocation; incentives and sanctions; accountability and monitoring systems
Teacher training institutions	Preparation of teachers for coping with heterogeneous classes of students	Quality control level of preparation of graduates		Recruitment and admission of students from under-served areas
Research institutions	Develop improved methods of instruction for all students	Research on within-school stratification of educational outcomes; improved methods of input-output analysis	Research on sources of school performance differences; improved methods of input-output analysis	Research on sources of between district differences in educational perforamance

Table 2 (Continued)

Agent	Source of discrepancy between performance and standard			
	Among students within classes	Among classes within schools	Among schools within districts	Among districts within state
Courts	Adjudication of cases alleging disparate treatment	Adjudication of cases alleging disparate treatment	Adjudication of cases alleging disparate treatment	Adjudication of cases alleging disparate treatment
Legislators				Provision for equitable funding
Faith and business communities	After school educational assistance programs	Teach-ins regarding educational inequities	Teach-ins regarding educational inequities; lobbying for equitable resources	Teach-ins regarding educational inequities; lobbying for equitable resources

Note. Cell entries are <u>illustrative</u> and are not intended to be definitive or exhaustive.

MAKING THE MATRIX WORK
Using the Framework for Improving Minority Achievement to Generate Ideas for Innovations or Reforms That Would Be Helpful (Even If It Seems As If They Are Not Feasible At Present)

This document suggests an approach to introducing and beginning to use the framework for improving minority achievement (the "matrix") to introduce and develop educational improvements in a school district.

This approach is a *first step* in a more comprehensive planning process that will be required to produce dramatic improvements in the achievement of Maryland's – and each school's and each school district's – minority achievement. The persistence of the gap between achievement standards and performance for *all* groups of Maryland students – and the continuing large gap between achievement standards and achievement for most Maryland minority groups – implies that a focused multi-faceted and long-term program of educational reform and intervention is required. In the coming months and years, it will be necessary for schools, school districts, and the state to continue planning to select programmatic approaches, identify and resolve obstacles to making changes in the status quo, create arrangements for monitoring the quality and implementation of innovations and other interventions, to manage change and measure progress. A first step is identifying multiple broad areas where changes have the potential for producing large improvement in minority achievement. The framework and the present suggestions are intended to stimulate this first step.

Consider taking the steps spelled out below to stimulate responsible parties in your district to use the framework for improving minority achievement. During a conference to be sponsored by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in early February 2002, we will build on the product of your work between now and then to plan for the further development of interventions to bring about radical improvements in minority achievement.

1.Explain to district personnel and other responsible parties the purposes of the framework, which are:

    a.Focus efforts on arrangements most likely to pay off in greater minority achievement
    b.Direct the attention of multiple responsible parties to <u>their own</u> roles in improving achievement
    c.Encourage the alignment of school and school system programs and reforms on objectives linked to minority achievement

2.Distribute copies of the document "The Draft Framework for the Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students" and copies of the two matrices: (a) actor/agent by intervention strategy and (b) actor/agent by area of effect. (I.e., copies of the matrices with nothing in the cells.) Explain that the framework implies that the many cells in the matrices mean not only that there are obviously many points at which and many ways in which action *may be taken* to improve minority achievement, but also that making large gains *requires* that action *be* taken at many points and in many ways.

3.Explain that radical improvements in the achievement of all of Maryland's students are required – and that achievement gains are especially needed for the growing numbers of minority students in our state and in your district. Indicate that the data on achievement disaggregated by ethnicity and poverty status make it clear that the multiple approaches to improving achievement that have been developed over the years have not eliminated large gaps between achievement goals and actual achievement. What is needed now is creativity in imagining *additional* ways to focus interventions to *radically* increase minority achievement. It is imperative now to generate ideas about reforms that will produce major gains in achievement.

4.Form a task force to use the matrix to generate bold general strategies for radically increasing minority achievement. Or, if you have already formed a strategic planning group, charge the existing group with developing these bold strategies. To stimulate their progress, provide them with copies of the two matrices containing examples of the kinds of approaches suggested by the framework. Make it clear that an important part of the charge is to develop ideas for reforms that (a) have not been tried before or (b) if tried have not been successfully pursued. You may wish to appoint task force members who represent each of the actors (responsible parties) implied by the columns in matrix Table 1. At the very least, compose the task force so that it is capable of considering the viewpoints and contributions of each group of agents needed to implement the framework.

5.Direct the task force to adopt a phased approach to planning. Indicate that it will be necessary to take up the problem of obstacles to moving ahead with bold ideas about ways to radically improve minority achievement and how these obstacles might be coped with, but that the task force should address these obstacles in a separate step to be taken after ideas for educational improvements have been generated. In particular, great attention will be paid to obstacles in conferences sponsored by MSDE to be held in February 2002. The current charge is to generate ideas about reforms or new interventions that could lead to dramatic gains in minority achievement.

6.Direct the task force to be systematic and thorough in considering each row and column in the Table 1 matrix and to consider each row and column in the Table 2 matrix. Because the problem is a large one, and because it is clear that multiple approaches all aligned with similar objectives will be required, no adequate approach will overlook any of the actors who can contribute to a solution, any of the intervention strategies, or any of the levels of effect implied by the framework. Require evidence that the task force has considered all parts of the framework.

Direct the task force to conduct its work rapidly. Indicate that the products of its work will be used in further planning and shared with other districts in a conference sponsored by MSDE in early February 2002.

7.Meet weekly with the chair of the task force to ask for a report on progress. Use the matrix to structure these discussions. Indicate to the task force chair that you will expect a report on what ideas the task force has considered for each of the intervention strategies, for each area of effect, and involving each agent or group of responsible parties.

At each of these weekly meetings, reiterate with the task force chair purposes of the framework (see point 1 above).

8.Require a written summary of task force progress at the end of November, a written update of progress at the end of December, and a formal report by the end of January 2002. Use this formal report to summarize your district's progress at the MSDE sponsored conference to be held in early February.

9.Indicate to the task force chair and to the task force participants who are employees of your school system that the planning for producing large gains in minority achievement is an important part of their jobs, and that their performance in this task will be important in appraising their performance.

10.Expect, and communicate to staff and the community that producing large gains in achievement will not be easy. Make sure everyone knows that your district will pursue the goal of radical improvement in minority achievement over the long haul and will not be turned away from this goal by short-term set backs or initial failures. Communicate that the present activity is simply one step on a long and difficult road to changing the status quo. By itself, this exercise will <u>not</u> change minority achievement. But that further steps will build on this step. This is a start, and a disciplined approach to planning and implementation over an extended period of time will be required. It is important that your personnel and your community know that simply identifying bold reforms will not bring the changes about or get innovation implemented in full and faithful form. But it is important that these reforms begin.

Part III:
Overcoming Obstacles

"The "gaps" have a significant head start on us. They have become maze-like, complicated entities that are well institutionalized, and with roots that were even constitutionalized in this country. Over time, the gaps have developed many immunities. In fact, we have reached a state of affairs where mere paradigm shifts are inadequate. At this point, elimination of gaps will require a reconceptualization of school and schooling as it impacts the education of all students. Simply stated, this remains a systemic issue and can only be resolved systemically."

Dr. Barbara Dezmon, AIMMS Steering Committee Chair

Another essential component of the Summit consisted of the Work Sessions where leaders came together to discuss important impediments to reform. The goals of the work session were:

A.   To receive input from participants on key areas of intervention and strategies required to eliminate the achievement gaps.

B.

Obstacles that impede accelerating student achievement and eliminating the poverty and race achievement gaps
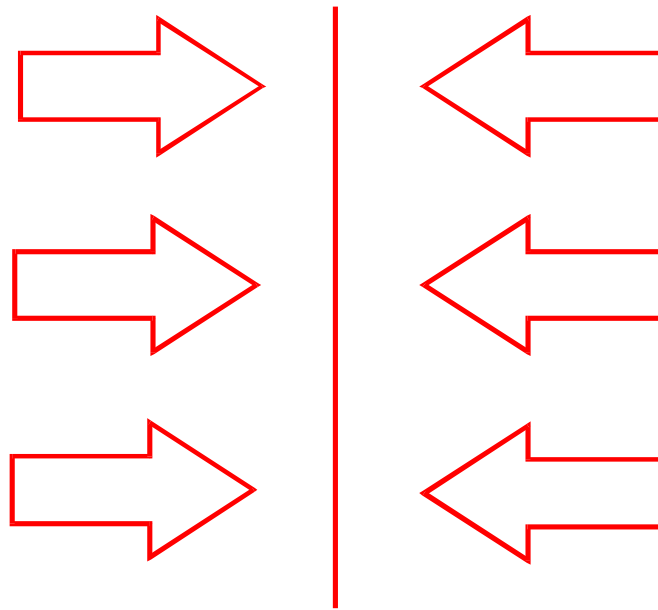
Planning to Overcome Obstacles to Change: Force-Field Analysis and Action Planning
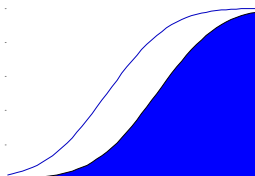
GOTTFREDSON ASSOCIATES, INC.
Behavioral Science Research and Development

Planning to Overcome Obstacles to Change:
Force-Field Analysis and Action Planning

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November 21, 2001

A training resource for increasing the skills of planners and change agents in facilitating change in organizations and communities.

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

In this training module you will learn a set of skills for helping groups to exchange an existing situation with a new, more desirable condition capable of being maintained. The techniques involve the application of some principles of the social psychology of groups and individuals in a structured way to overcome some of the common limitations of ordinary human problem solving.

Objectives

The objectives of this learning module are to help you improve your skills in

G managing and responding to objections by group members when contemplating new procedures or arrangements,

G identifying forces that are maintaining the status quo in an organization or community,

G anticipating and resolving obstacles to bringing about desired organizational changes,

G gaining group support for adopting desired changes,

G developing action plans to achieve new arrangements that can be sustained over time, and

G creating mechanisms that reward people for progress towards desired goals.

How the Learning Will Be Organized

1. You will be presented with a set of "learning points."

2. The learning points will be explained, with examples provided.

3. A structure for conducting an analysis of constraints on and possibilities for change will be provided and explained in reference to the learning points.

4. A structure for generating a plan or *strategy* will be provided and explained in reference to the learning points.

5. You will complete a self-test covering the learning points and the use of the structured methods.

6. You will apply the principles and methods to analyze a concrete problem in implementing a program in your own community.

Learning Points:
Force-Field Analysis and Action Planning

1. The status quo is maintained by a balance of forces, some restraining against movement in the desired direction and others impelling activity in the desired direction.

2. To conduct an analysis of these forces (a *force-field analysis*), it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the direction the organization wishes to move—the nature of the desired state of affairs.

3. To move an established status-quo in a desired direction it is useful to reduce the influence of restraining forces—or to change their direction.

4. The force-field is best analyzed by the group of persons experiencing the forces—including the persons making decisions and those affected by the changes to be made.

5. Effective problem-solving involving a change in the status quo usually requires consensual public commitment to a goal by members of the group.

6. Commitment to a goal is unlikely unless a feasible path to its achievement is perceived by all members of the group. Perceptions are not always objectively correct, but they nevertheless constrain action just as do any other elements of the force field.

7. Standards for performance, feedback, and the expectation of follow-up enhance action directed towards the goal.

Explanation and Examples:
Principles for Force-Field Analysis and Action Planning[1]

The status quo is maintained by a balance of forces, some restraining against movement in the desired direction and others impelling activity in the desired direction.

Psychologist Kurt Lewin and his colleagues and students have provided a set of concepts and procedures for understanding the process of social change that has come to be known as *force-field analysis.* This refers to the analysis of the physical, social, economic, or psychological forces that affect behaviors or choices in an organization.

The status quo in an organization is best regarded—according to this perspective—as a *process.* For example, any given organizational activity occurs with a reasonable degree of regularity and predictability because of a social "quasi-stationary equilibrium." The words "quasi-stationary equilibrium" are used because it is not true that there is no change or variability in what is done, but rather because a balance of forces ensures that an approximate steady state will persist within a certain latitude of movement.

This balance of forces is illustrated in Figure 1. Forces impelling towards change in one direction are equaled by forces in the other direction. Whenever activity or practices move very far from the status quo in either direction, the balanced forces restore the equilibrium.

To conduct an analysis of these forces (a *force-field analysis*), it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the direction the organization wishes to move—the nature of the desired state of affairs.

Force-field analysis is useful for discovering what is anchoring an organization or program in place and what resources and obstacles may exist for moving in a certain direction. But it is not a method that is of much value in determining what the direction or nature of change should be. That function is served by *needs assessment*. Therefore, force-field analysis presupposes as a starting point a clear idea about the changes or innovations that are desirable.

Force-field analysis is often a useful adjunct to needs assessment, however,

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[1]The principles discussed here are drawn from many sources, the most important of which are: (1) Lewin, K. (1947). Group decision and social change. In T. M. Newcomb & E. L. Hartley (Eds.). *Readings in social psychology*, NY: Holt. (2) Coch, L. & French, J. R. P., Jr. (1948). Overcoming resistance to change. *Human Relations, 11*, 512-532. (3) Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (1990). Work motivation and satisfaction: Light at the end of the tunnel. *Psychological Science, 2*, 240-246. (4) Practical experience in applying these methods with groups. Other influences are specifically cited at relevant points.

Worse State ... Preferred State

Driving forces · Restraining forces
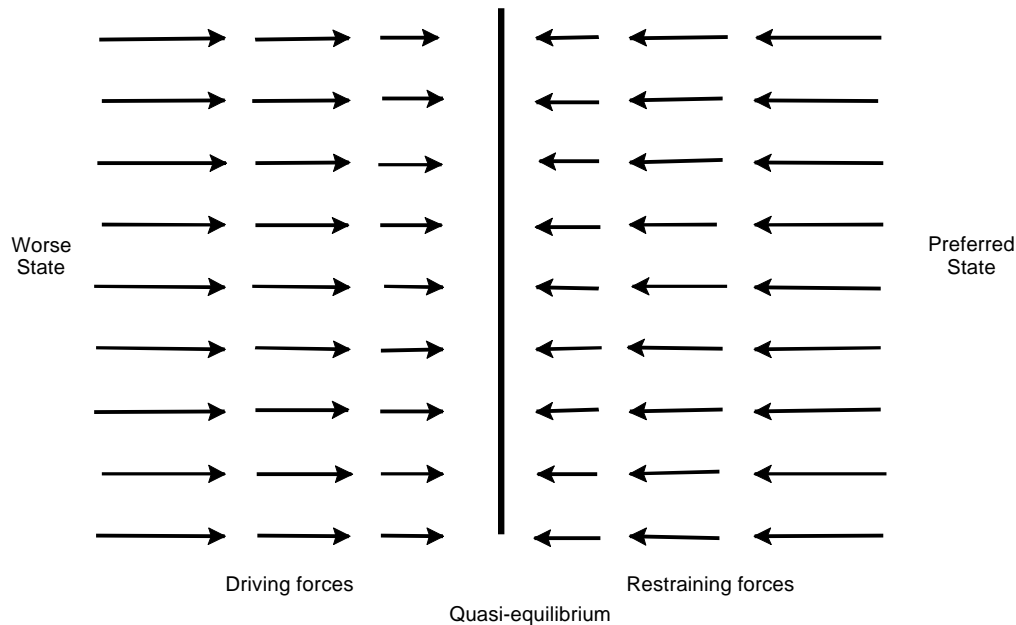
Quasi-equilibrium

Figure 1. How the Status Quo Is Maintained

because there are usually several alternative program design choices that would meet the objectives identified in the assessment of needs. Some of these alternatives may be more feasible than others, and force-field analysis can often reveal that a choice initially regarded as infeasible is in fact feasible or that a choice regarded as feasible is burdened by previously unanticipated obstacles.

To move an established status-quo in a desired direction it is useful to reduce the influence of restraining forces—or to change their direction.

Because the balance of forces is what maintains the state of quasi-equilibrium, that balance must be altered to change the status quo. One approach to change that is often attempted is to increase the strength of the forces impelling in the desired direction. By itself, this is generally a flawed method. In many social organizations, the strength of forces resisting a shift in the status quo increase the greater the deviation from the status quo becomes. This likelihood was illustrated in Figure 1 by the use of shorter arrows in the region of the status quo and longer arrows (indicating more powerful forces) the farther conditions deviate from the quasi-equilibrium.

What often occurs when an attempt is made to apply new or greater forces to alter an existing equilibrium is increased tension, just as tension increases when one exerts force against a coiled spring.

To change the status quo, it is usually more effective to render existing restraining forces irrelevant, to diminish their force, or to change the direction of their force. Because this idea is often difficult to grasp, an example will be helpful.

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An example: In recent years it has become common for school districts to impose a "no pass–no play" rule that forbids students who fail to meet an academic performance standard (often grades of "C" or better) to participate in organized school sports. These policies are applied in the expectation that they will improve academic performance by emphasizing academic standards and punishing poor performance. Such policies are almost surely misguided, however, because their primary effect is to remove an important resource for school personnel: incentives for students to expend effort on school work that can be applied on a daily basis. A school that links *daily* participation in athletics to *daily* satisfactory completion of homework or to school conduct is able to respond routinely to student performance. But a school that revokes the privilege of participation for a semester at a time loses this important source of social control. A change agent wishing to substitute the daily withdrawal of the athletic privilege for the existing semester-long withdrawal of that privilege might encounter the force field illustrated in Figure 2.

Status Quo

Desire to provide extracurricular activities

School board desire to deny rewards to poor academic performers

Limited Ability to Regulate Behavior

Daily Opportunity to Respond to Behavior

Desire to improve effectiveness in controlling misconduct

School board insistence on "standards" and guarding against their erosion

Desire of teachers to control rewards and punishments

Belief that only acceptable performance should be rewarded

Absence of Effective Incentives

Incentives for Student Performance

Other impelling forces

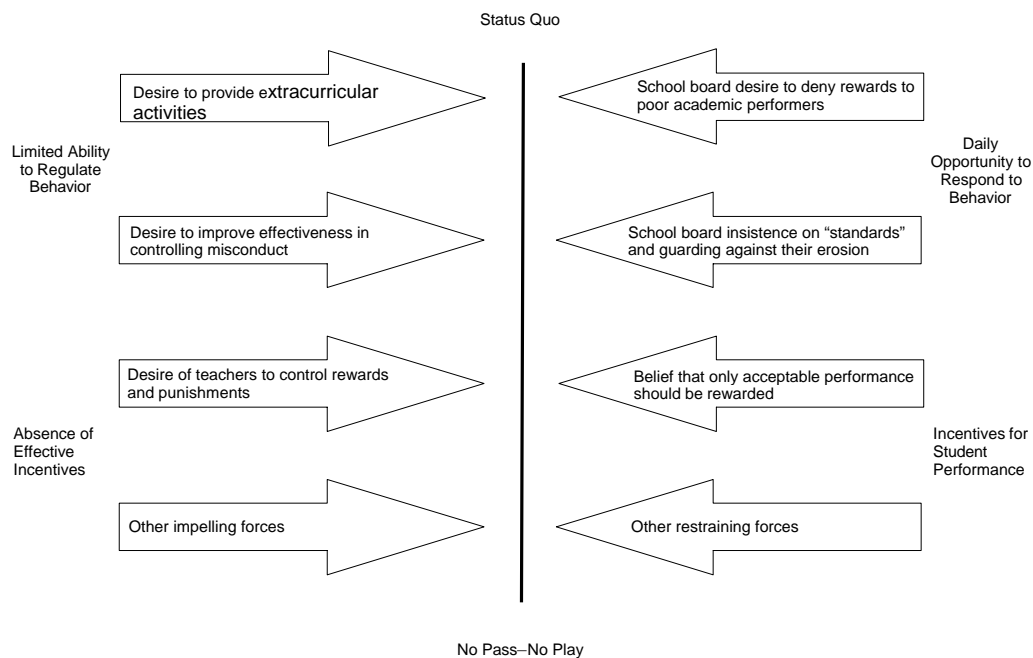Other restraining forces

No Pass–No Play

Figure 2. How the No Pass–No Play Policy Is Maintained

How might one diminish the influence or change the direction of some of the restraining forces? Perhaps some members of the school board could be convinced that the immediate (daily) denial of the reward of athletic participation may accord even more with their desires to punish poor school effort than does punishment applied only once each semester. Such a re-construal would tend to change the direction of this force. Similarly, some members of the board could be persuaded

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that daily attention and responses to academic performance *may* be more effective in maintaining academic standards than a once-a-semester review, so that they would support an experiment to learn whether this is the case. This would create a new impelling force, and one source of resistance would be diminished. If enough
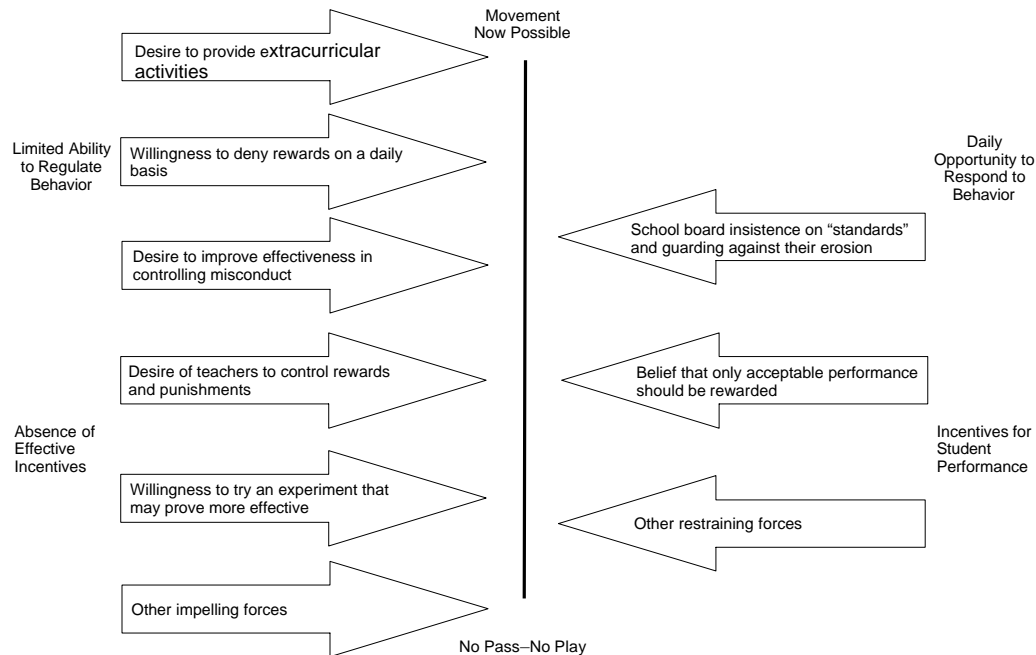

Figure 3. How the No Pass–No Play Policy Might Be Changed

board members could be persuaded in these ways, a new force field would be that illustrated in Figure 3.

Reducing the influence or changing the direction of a restraining force will generally result in more lasting change than increasing a driving force, because any change induced by such an increase could be maintained only by the continued expenditure of effort.

The force-field is best analyzed with the help of the group of persons experiencing the forces—including persons making the decisions and those affected by the changes to be made.

To achieve organizational change, it is the psychology *of the persons whose behavior must be altered* that is most important. Accordingly, it is important to analyze the force field as it is perceived by *these* actors. Very often, these persons share a common set of perceptions or understandings of the force field that are objectively incorrect. For example, it is a common experience for a change agent to discover that most or all members of a group hold incorrect beliefs about laws, regulations, or policies—and these incorrect beliefs restrain against moving in the desired direction. Simply asking, "who made that rule?" or "who established that

policy?" can upon quick investigation lead to the conclusion that there is no such rule except in the beliefs of those constrained by it. A similar phenomenon (known as "pluralistic ignorance") occurs when members of a group have incorrect perceptions of the views of others, and these incorrect perceptions restrain against change in the status quo.[2]

Even in the realm of "objectively correct" perceptions, it is again those who are themselves concerned with the force field who may be in the best position to identify the forces operating on their behavior.

A group who will be involved in implementing the change should be involved in analyzing the force field, because the psychology of groups is different in important ways from the psychology of individuals. Attempts to change the opinions or intentions of individuals either through lecture presentations or through individual persuasion both approach the individual in the context of his or her private thoughts and perceptions. Yet we know that individuals are very likely to conform to their perceptions of the expectations of others in their social group.[3] Furthermore, we know that individuals tend to seek information from and be more susceptible to influence by others whom they perceive as similar to themselves.[4]

If group interaction can be structured in ways that allow group members to safely reveal information about their perceptions and views, observe others rehearsing new positions,[5] and conform to a newly emerged group consensus, then commitment to a new course of action is more likely to be achieved (than through similar analysis conducted individually).

Finally, group process can be structured in ways that harness pressures for group members to play socially defined roles in a productive sequence that can be more difficult to achieve in one-to-one interaction. An example of how such structure in group process is helpful is in coping with negativism and the "yeah, but" phenomenon when attempting to plan for change. This is explained below when the structure for conducting a force-field analysis is described (in the instructions

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[2]Daniel Katz and Floyd Alport called this phenomenon "pluralistic ignorance." See Toch, H., & Klofas, J. (1984). Pluralistic ignorance revisited. In G. M. Stephenson & J. H. Davis (Eds.), *Progress in applied social psychology, Vol. 2*. London: Wiley.

[3](1) Asch, S. (1951). Effects of group pressure upon the modification and distortion of judgments. In H. Guetzkow (Ed.), *Groups, leadership, and men*. Pittsburgh: Carnegie Press. (2) Festinger, L., Schachter, S., & Back, K. (1968). Operation of group standards. In D. Cartwright & A. Zander (Eds.), *Group dynamics: Research and theory* (3rd ed.), pp. 152-164. NY: Harper & Row.

[4]Cialdini, R. B., & Trost, M. R. (1998). Social influence: Social norms, conformity, and compliance. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (4th ed., Vol. II, pp. 151 - 192). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

[5]Earley, P. C., & Kanfer, R. (1985). The influence of component participation and role models on goal acceptance, goal satisfaction and performance. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 36*, 378-390.

for analyzing obstacles and resources).

Effective problem-solving involving a change in the status quo usually requires consensual public commitment to a goal by members of the group.

People will work to achieve difficult goals if they accept and are committed to those goals and believe that goal attainment is possible.[6] Furthermore, public commitment to a goal or set of new activities is more effective in producing desired new behavior than is private commitment.[7] Fortunately, there is generally great pressure towards uniformity in groups,[8] so that consensus in public commitment is often achievable.[9]

Commitment to a goal is unlikely unless a feasible path to its achievement is perceived by all members of the group. Perceptions are not always objectively correct, but they nevertheless constrain action just as do any other elements of the force field.

An aim of force-field analysis is to learn about the perceptions of members of the group who will maintain the status quo or make change possible. As noted earlier, it is the force field as perceived by these decision makers that maintains the quasi-stationary equilibrium. Analysis of the force field must attend not only to the hindrances and facilitating factors that *are* perceived, but also to factors which are *not* perceived. Often, mobilization towards change is stifled by perceptions or beliefs that are held in common and go unquestioned by all members of an organization, but that can yield to alternative perceptions or interpretations if approached creatively.

Figure 4 illustrates a situation in which a person perceives no way to get to goal 2, and so can not choose to pursue that goal. Figure 5 illustrates how the person can be free to pursue goal 2 once certain unperceived elements of a path to that goal

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[6]Erez, M., & Zidon, I. (1984). Effect of goal acceptance on the relationship of goal difficulty to performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 69*, 69-78.

[7](1) Lewin, K. (1947). Group decision and social change. In T. M. Newcomb & E. L. Hartley (Eds.), *Readings in social psychology*. NY: Holt. (2) Hollenbeck, J. R., Williams, C. R., & Klein, H. J. (1989). An empirical examination of the antecedents of commitment to difficult goals. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 74*, 18-23.

[8]Cartwright, D., & Zander, A. (1968). Pressures to uniformity in groups: Introduction. In D. Cartwright & A. Zander (Eds.), *Group dynamics: Research and theory* (3rd ed., pp. 139-151). NY: Harper & Row.

[9]An explanation of the central role of goals in directing human performance is contained in Locke & Latham's goal theory: Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (1990). *A theory of goal setting and task performance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
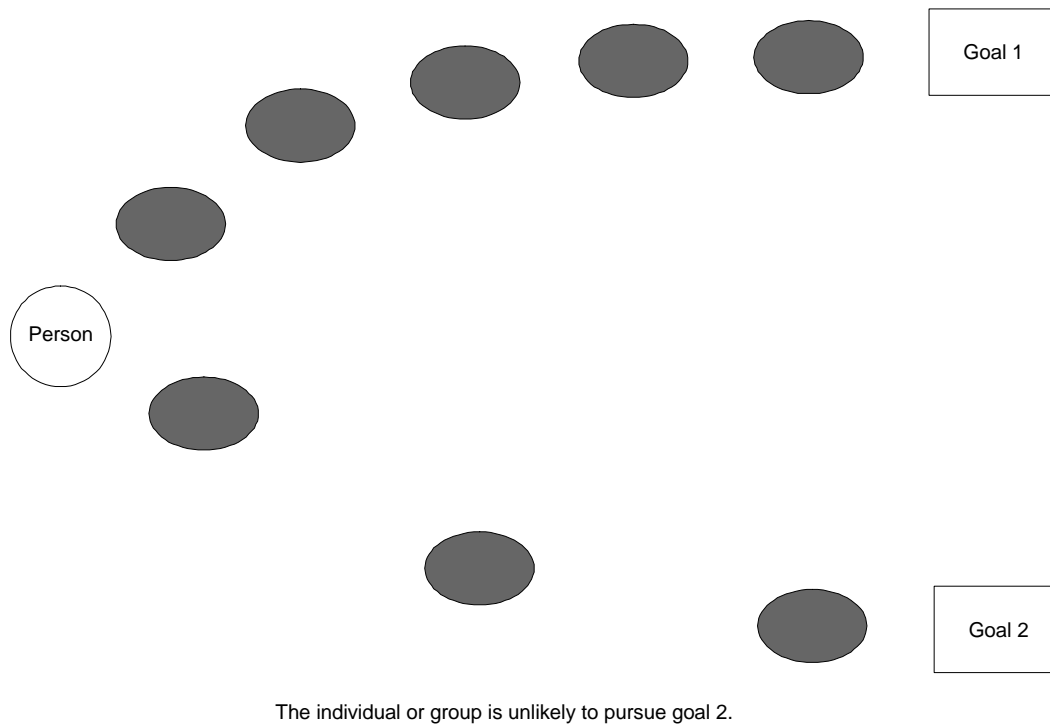
Goal 1

Person

Goal 2

The individual or group is unlikely to pursue goal 2.

Figure 4. A Person or Group Is Likely to Pursue a Goal Only If a Path to It Is Perceived

Goal 1

Person

Goal 2

When the individual or group perceives previously unperceived
parts of a path, the person or group is more likely to pursue goal 2.
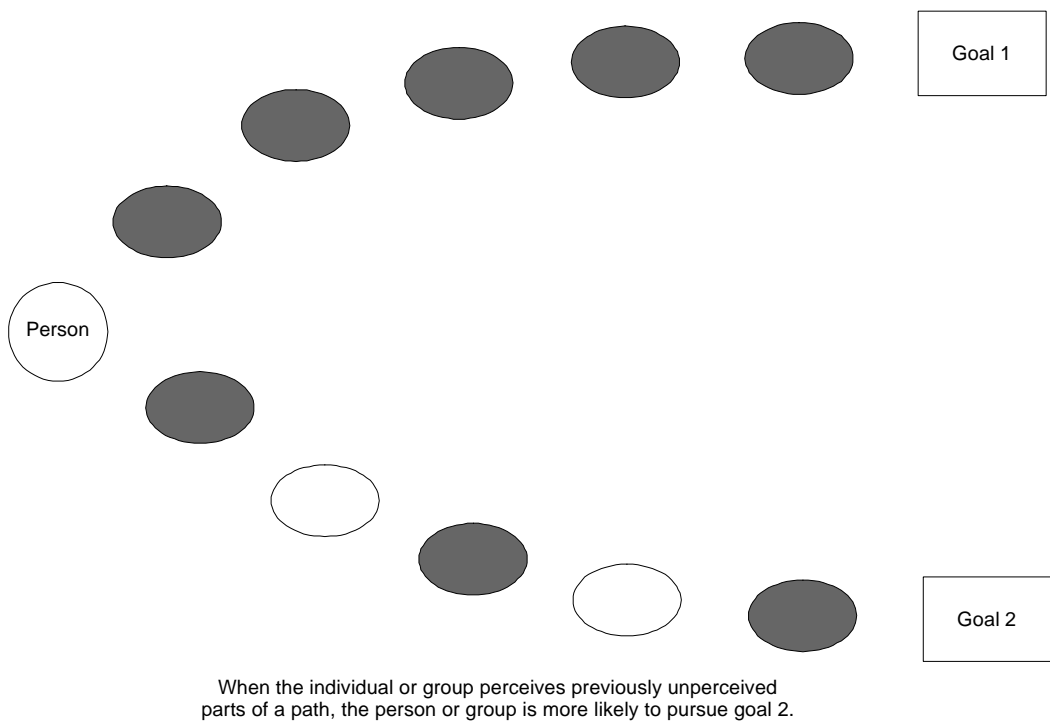
Figure 5. When Previously Unperceived Parts of a Path are Revealed, A Person or Group Is More Likely to Pursue Goal 2

are revealed.[10] Revealing such possibilities is one of the purposes of force-field analysis in planning and problem solving. An example of how these additional steps towards goal 2 emerge from an analysis is provided by the Figure 3 diagram of the altered force field for the 'no pass–no play' problem. The steps to obtain agreements from board members to re-construe the situation are the previously un-perceived steps that are available once the analysis has been performed.

The psychology of the group is different once a new path towards a goal has been perceived; changes in mood or attitude, and in the level of enthusiasm about change can be quite evident.

Revealing the nature of the force-field, possible errors in its perception, and the availability of a path previously unperceived are tools for "unfreezing" group custom or breaking a social habit. Plans made on the basis of the new perceptions can then be implemented to "refreeze" a new status quo by altering the force field permanently.

Standards for performance, feedback, and the expectation of follow-up enhance action directed towards the goal.

> People responsible for social management are frequently deprived of their legitimate desire for reconnaissance on a realistic basis. Under these circumstances, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with achievement becomes mainly a question of temperament. In a field that lacks objective standards of achievement, no learning can take place. If we cannot judge whether an action has led forward or backward, if we have no criteria for evaluating the relation between effort and achievement, there is nothing to prevent us from coming to the wrong conclusions and encouraging the wrong work habits.[11]

Planning should include the specification of concrete, observable standards for performance, benchmarks of progress, and measurable objectives and goals. This enables feedback on performance to be assessed in comparison with these standards, benchmarks, objectives, and goals. Goal setting without feedback, and feedback without goal setting are both unlikely to produce the same degree of effort towards change as the combination of goals and provision for feedback. As an important review of the research on motivation put it, "Goal setting without feedback appears to have little long-term effect on performance.... [And] without a goal or standard, people do not appraise feedback as significant and thus do not

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[10]Theoretically, such an act of insight involves a person's cognitive reorganization of the field. Lewin, K. (1935). *A dynamic theory of personality*. NY: McGraw-Hill.

[11]Lewin, K. (1947, op. cit., p. 334).

take action in response to it.[12]

There is much evidence that goals or incentives in combination with feedback on performance lead to improvements in performance over time, provided that improvement is possible.[13]

A Structure for Conducting a Force-Field Analysis[14]

Steps for Force-Field Analysis

Here are the steps for conducting a force-field analysis. Each step is explained following the list. Before taking these steps, your group should have a clear idea of the change you wish to bring about.

1. Identify obstacles—the restraining forces.

2. Determine which obstacles are most important. List obstacles in order of priority.

3. Identify resources—the enabling forces.

4. Develop a general strategy—a plan to overcome resistance to change. Get consensual public commitment to the strategy,

5. Specify critical benchmarks—observable signals of changes in the force field.

The following paragraphs explain how to carry out each step. It is important that the person leading the group in a force-field analysis execute these steps *in this order*, or have a very good reason for deviating.

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[12]Lock, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (1990, op. cit.). For a briefer account see also Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (1990). Work motivation and satisfaction: Light at the end of the tunnel. *Psychological Science, 1*, 240-246.

[13]Gottfredson, G. D. (1996). The Hawthorne Misunderstanding (And How to Get the Hawthorne Effect in Action Research). *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 33*, 28-48.

[14]Alternative structures or advice for conducting a force-field analysis have been provided elsewhere. Readers may also find those accounts useful or preferable to the present account. (1) Blanton, J., & Alley, S. (1976). Program development: A manual for organizational self-study. *JSAS Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology, 6*, 26. (Ms. No. 1216). (2) Schmuck, R. A., & Runkel, P. J. (1985). *Handbook of organization development in schools* (3rd ed., Chap. 5). Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield. (3) Speir, M. S. (1973). Kurt Lewin's "force field analysis." *Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*, pp. 111-113. (4) Morris, W. C., & Saskin, M. (1976). *Organization behavior in action: Skill building experiences*, pp. 138-140. St Paul, MN: West.

Step 1: Obstacles

First, working with the entire team, use a large pad of newsprint paper[15] to make a *comprehensive* list of obstacles to moving in the desired direction. *Do not attempt to resolve these obstacles at this time*. Set aside all discussion of ways to circumvent obstacles until later. (It may be useful to note ideas about resources on a sheet of paper that is covered by the obstacle sheet.) When a group member begins to discuss a resource, say "That is a resource. We are working on obstacles now." The task at this stage is to produce a complete list of *every* important obstacle. (You can add others to the list later, but try to be as complete as possible at this point.)

There is an important reason for beginning with obstacles and deferring the discussion of resources until later. In many (if not most) groups, at least one nattering nabob of negativism (NNN) makes problem solving difficult. Each time an idea about problem resolution arises, the NNN can generate one to several reasons why the idea will not work. This "yeah but" phenomenon leads to switching from topic to topic without resolving any obstacles. By insisting on a complete listing of all obstacles at the outset, it will be possible later to structure the discussion of each *important* obstacle in turn. When an obstacle is mentioned repeatedly, say "Isn't that pretty much the same as obstacle number X?"

Use verbal rewards for on-task behavior. Each time a group member offers an obstacle say, "Thanks" or "Good, that's another one." Write each obstacle on the newsprint legibly, incorporating your own or any other group member's clarifying language. Writing on the chart concretely reinforces on-task behavior, and it keeps the contribution public so that it can be observed and recalled by all members of the group.

Encourage honesty. One important obstacle that groups often fail to discuss is their own attitudes about the project to be undertaken. If one or more group members have reservations about the desirability of moving forward, include that in the list of obstacles. Try to determine the nature of the reservation.

Propose some common categories of obstacles if they are not being identified by the group. Ask the following questions to generate information if information is not offered:

[15]You can develop the list on a blackboard or plain paper, but the giant newsprint pads make it easier for everyone to participate and see the ideas in written form. Unlike lists made on a chalk board, notes on newsprint can easily be taken away so that edited and printed versions can be prepared with a word processor. If a laptop computer and video projector are available, you may use a word processing or presentation program to record ideas and project them on the wall. This often has the advantage of greater legibility than when newsprint is used. A disadvantage of computerized projection is that multiple pages cannot be viewed at the same time by the group—as they can if newsprint is posted around the walls of a room.

- · "Is there enough money to do this?"
- · "Does anyone not want us to do this?"
- · "Would any individuals or groups oppose us if it appeared that we would move ahead with this?"
- · "Is everyone here convinced that it is a good idea to move ahead with this?"
- · "Are there any rules, regulations, policies, or laws that would make this difficult?"
- · "Are there any other forces from within our organization that will restrain us from doing this?"
- · "Are there any other forces from outside our agency (sources of money, sponsors, clients, constituencies, regulators) that will restrain us from doing this?"
- · "Why hasn't this change occurred already?"

Attempt to be exhaustive. If enumeration of obstacles is terminated too early, important obstacles which group members may feel uncomfortable about openly discussing may be omitted. It is time to quit eliciting obstacles only when the group can generate no more, or the obstacles listed are so trivial that it is obvious they can be overcome easily, or they generate laughter.

Step 2: Identify the Most Important Obstacles

Second, decide through group discussion which of the obstacles is most important, next most important, and so forth. Number the elements of your list accordingly.[16] In most instances, a satisfactory plan for change can be devised and most group members will become committed to the plan if the one to three most important obstacles can be coped with. It is rarely necessary to discuss all the obstacles identified, but it is important that they be on the list because (a) they can then be explicitly and publicly examined for their importance and (b) they provide a vehicle for and help to control the NNN phenomenon.

Step 3: Identify Resources

Now the team should shift from obstacle-finding mode to problem-solving mode. Lead the group in this shift by explaining that whereas in the previous steps the group was concerned with listing obstacles and that identifying forces working against the desired change was competent role behavior, competent role behavior now consists of finding ways to overcome these obstacles.

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[16]Some guidelines for FFA advise estimating the strength of each restraining influence, and diagramming the forces using arrows of different lengths. Although doing this helps to produce a graphical representation of a situation and facilitates communication about it, this force estimation and diagramming is time consuming and cumbersome. It can usually be dispensed with if obstacles can simply be ordered in importance.

Explain that it is generally better to find a way to render an obstacle irrelevant, to diminish its force, or to change its direction than to attempt to overcome an obstacle by applying counter force. Explain why (see page 4).

Start with the most important obstacle and a fresh sheet of newsprint paper. Encourage group production of ideas about ways to get around this first obstacle. What resources (money, interpersonal influence, prestige, authority, personnel) can you apply to overcome this obstacle?

Orally reinforce contributions. Write each idea about a new resource that can be applied on the flip chart as a means of rewarding on-task behavior, to ensure that all contributions are public, and so that no idea is lost.

Suggest potential resources that group members may not themselves suggest (because they are captives of "pluralistic ignorance" or "social habit"). For example, ask, "Is there really a written state regulation making this impossible?" "Will the person(s) with decision-making authority make funds for this available?" Remember that many of the restraints that an organization's members have long assumed are due to rules, regulations, policies, or laws may not in fact be such. Similarly, ask "Who made that policy? Could that individual change the policy? What would it take to get so-and-so to change the policy?"

Never argue about a matter of fact. Get the correct information whenever uncertainty or disagreement exists. In most cases, a phone call to a person with the relevant factual information should be made immediately during the meeting. Send an individual from the room to make a phone call or to get a pertinent document sent by telefax, or use an assistant to do so. Pursue another idea while waiting for the factual information.

For each important obstacle, one at a time, ask what could change the direction of this element of the force field. Can, by adopting a more fundamental perspective or by appealing to an overarching commonality of goals, this force be made to work for change in the desired direction rather than against it?

When one or several seemingly good ideas for coping with the first obstacle have been generated, move on to another obstacle.

Usually, it is not necessary to be exhaustive in discovering resources. It is often useful to determine the general nature of the range of impelling forces, however, because this information can be useful in reversing the direction of restraining forces by reference to common aims of the planned change and the individuals or groups who currently resist change.

Step 4: Develop a Strategy

At some point, a *strategy* for applying resources to overcoming the most important obstacles should emerge. Psychologically, the members of the groups will perceive steps to attain the goal that had not previously been perceived (remember Figures 4 and 5). At this point try to formulate a general strategy or plan in words through group discussion. Usually, a few sentences can capture the essence of a strategy. In the "no pass–no play" example used earlier, the general strategy was: "Convince board members that we are increasing the frequency of consequences for a failure of effort and that by using daily withdrawal of privileges we may be promoting even stronger academic standards. Persuade the previously resistant board members to allow us to try this idea as an experiment. If our arrangements do not prove to be more effective, we will agree not to press for a permanent change in the policy."

Record the strategy on the newsprint.

Seek consensus and public commitment from all group members. If the FFA exercise has been successful, the mood and attitude of the group will often be quite different than that prevailing when the exercise was begun—sometimes elation prevails. Test for success by asking each person, "Do you think this strategy will work?" Everyone should reply with a "yes" or "it has a good chance of working."

Important: If there is not general agreement that the strategy is feasible and desirable at this point, the group should either (a) continue with the consideration of resources until an attractive plan emerges or (b) reconsider the change it intends to introduce to select an alternative that is more feasible given available resources.

Step 5: Specify Critical Benchmarks

A critical benchmark[17] is an *observable* decision, arrangement, agreement, or change in resources that alters the balance of forces in the force field.

In the "no pass–no play" example, critical benchmarks might include the following: (a) board member Johnson agrees that anything that might increase adult influence over student effort might be a step in the right direction, (b) the board chair agrees to schedule a discussion of the merits of alternative ways of tying athletic participation to academic performance for a board meeting, (c) the board approves of a trial of the new idea as an experiment.

List the critical benchmarks—the key decisions, arrangements, agreements, or personnel changes that are required to move forward with the strategy—on a large piece of paper for everyone to see.

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[17]A critical benchmark is akin to what Lewin (1947) referred to as a "gate."

For each critical benchmark indicate *what* observable change occurs, *who* the primary person for ensuring the achievement of this benchmark shall be, and *when* the benchmark must be observed to signal satisfactory progress with the plan.

The list of critical benchmarks for implementing the strategy serve to (a) indicate in an objective manner what is expected to be accomplished by specific individuals, (b) provide feedback signaling progress in implementing the strategy when benchmarks are attained, (c) provide warning signals that the strategy is not working (if benchmarks are not being met), and (d) provide for the anticipation of follow-up on implementation of the plan (a motivational tool).

The plan incorporating a summary statement describing the strategy and a complete list of critical benchmarks, complete with observable benchmark statements, specification of a person responsible for achieving each, and a date for completion should be reproduced and made available to all members of the group. Monitoring and follow-up on this plan is essential.

Important: When monitoring of progress indicates that critical benchmarks are not being met, the group should reconsider its force-field analysis and devise an alternative strategy.

Appendix A: Self-Test

Test your understanding of the principles underlying the use of force-field analysis by answering the following questions. If you are not sure of an answer, re-read the pertinent section of this document.

1. How does force-field analysis explain how current conditions tend to persist over time?

2. How can "pluralistic ignorance" maintain the status quo?

3. Describe a technique for coping with the "yeah but" phenomenon in planning for change.

4. Describe three ways of overcoming resistance to change, and explain why one method is likely to be ineffective and explain why an alternative is more often useful in creating lasting change.

5. What obstacles to change might an organizational outsider be of more help in understanding than an organizational insider?

6. Is an attempt at persuasion in an individual face-to-face discussion likely to be more effective or less effective than a group discussion in facilitating change in behavior in an organization? Why?

7. How can one tell that a group has developed a strategy it is likely to pursue? Unlikely to pursue?

8. What is a critical benchmark? Why is the specification of CBs important?

Appendix B: Strategy and Benchmark Worksheet

Write a description of the overall strategy in a few sentences.

Next list the critical benchmarks required to implement this strategy. Each critical benchmark should signal a change in the force field.

Critical benchmark	Person responsible	Date

Use continuation sheets as necessary.

Appendix

Minority Achievement in Maryland

Executive Summary of the
Minority Achievement Reports
1998-2001

Executive Summary of
Maryland State Minority Achievement Reports 1998-2001

In September 1998, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) released the first report about the status of minority student achievement in the state. This landmark report, *Minority Achievement in Maryland: the State of the State*, details statewide and local school system student achievement data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.   The report discusses indicators of student achievement, such as the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP), the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/5), Maryland Functional Tests, and the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), as well as attendance, dropout rates, suspensions, and participation in higher education.   In addition to summaries of research findings related to minority achievement, this report also features commentary on a range of achievement issues, including funding equity, school staffing, urban concerns, and poverty. The report also includes background information about achievement gaps, especially for African American and Hispanic students, the largest populations in Maryland for whom disaggregated data indicate significant disparities related to achievement.

The above report was followed by an interim report published in 1999. Besides providing updates on the achievement data, this report emphasized the need to align strategies within, between, and among MSDE and local school systems as well as the necessity for educational agencies to shift from traditional paradigms in areas such as administration, curriculum, instruction, and assessment and to restructure the delivery of education to address the needs of today's diverse student population. The last report, *Minority Achievement in Maryland at the Millennium*, produced by the Achievement Initiative for Maryland's Minority Students (AIMMS) Steering Committee and published by MSDE in 2001, presents a further examination of critical topics relevant to education throughout the state. The report is based on the 1998-1999 achievement data for Maryland's students and provides counsel for considering current and future minority achievement data in Maryland. Topics explored in the report include the impact teacher efficacy, socio-economics, tracking, and disciplinary processes on the achievement of minority and poor students.

The data in all three reports show that too many students are not achieving at a satisfactory level based on multiple indicators. The reports also define the nature of the "achievement gaps" that continue at both state and local levels. These gaps consist of the overt disparities between diverse groups of students, the distance between achievement levels of students from all groups and educational standards, and the more covert gap between individual student outcomes and potentials that are never realized. The three reports are intended to stimulate thought and actions to eliminate these gaps. Accordingly, both the first and last reports include recommendations to address minority achievement and achievement disparities. These recommendations focus on factors that impact student's academic success both directly and indirectly. Most important, all of the reports have been offered with the certainty that Marylanders will rise to meet the challenge posed in the achievement data and assure that every student in every Maryland school will succeed.

Recommendations from *Minority Achievement in Maryland: the State of the State*, 1998

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Recommendation 1: Maryland State Standards

In order to ensure that all children receive the educational support necessary to perform at the highest levels of academic achievement as measured by the Maryland School Performance Program, it is recommended that the state standards for satisfactory and excellent in mathematics, science, reading, and social studies be extended to apply to the following ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, ESOL, and special education subpopulations of students within a district, as well as the overall population. Therefore, any consideration or recognition of the progress of schools toward standards should explicitly include consideration of results from minority students as well as the overall results. The inherent goal here is to ensure accountability for every student to meet or exceed rigorous performance and achievement standards.

Recommendation 2: Recognition, Awards, and Incentives

As part of MSDE's recognition and incentive programs for schools, disaggregated data should be analyzed to determine if sustained and steady progress has been demonstrated, and that reported progress includes similar gains for all subpopulations.   Therefore any consideration of awards to schools for academic achievement should be based on disaggregated data and include the performance results of minority and other subpopulations as well as the overall population. In addition, evidence of progress should reflect the closing of gaps in achievement levels for all groups of students.

Recommendation 3: Discretionary Resources

Discretionary resources available to school systems through MSDE should be allocated to support the development of local school system based improvement plans that include strategies to close achievement gaps. Distribution of these funds should be bound to strict accountability procedures and structured qualifications that assure effective selection and implementation of programs.

Recommendation 4: Achievement Initiatives for Minority Students

MSDE should establish a statewide Achievement Initiatives for Minority Students (AIMS) program to identify and distribute information about exemplary programs and strategies for raising minority achievement.   In addition, MSDE's evaluation of existing and new programs should include an analysis of student progress using disaggregated data to determine closing of disparities in the achievement of different groups.

Recommendation 5: Data Related to Achievement

Along with race, MSDE should intensively investigate the inferential aspects of the relationship between poverty and achievement in local school systems throughout Maryland. MSDE should

provide statistics related to the condition of schools serving various and predominant student populations. In addition to funding inequities, information such as the professional education and teaching experience of the staff, spending allocations for instruction, school organization and personnel deployment, use of federal and state categorical funds, use of technology, etc. is important in developing policies to maximize school effects on achievement.

Recommendation 6: Data on School Effects

MSDE should identify schools with high concentrations of students from poverty and/or minority backgrounds who are academically successful, and identify ways to help other schools focus on positive school effects.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Recommendation 1: Practices, Programs, and Initiatives – Each local school system (LSS) should demonstrate commitment to student achievement by implementing effective practices, programs, and initiatives that specifically address achievement disparities. Such approaches should include full and rigorous compliance with all components of the Education That Is Multicultural (ETM) Regulation, including curriculum infusion, instruction, staff development, climate, and instructional resources.

Recommendation 2: Parent Involvement – All LSS plans should include programs and strategies to promote and sustain involvement of parents and family members of diverse backgrounds, particularly targeting under represented groups.

Recommendation 3: Equity Concerns – Each LSS should formalize policies and procedures to establish a coordinated systemic effort to monitor and address staff, student, and parent equity concerns. These concerns include the issues of student achievement, distribution of resources, and equitable treatment.

Recommendation 4: Achievement Gaps – Each LSS should routinely collect and analyze data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and special populations, and develop and implement strategies to close achievement gaps and provide remedies for disparities reflected in the data.

Recommendation 5: Diverse Programs – Local school systems should provide comprehensive programs that address their diverse student populations. These programs should seek to develop leadership, promote life skills, and link those skills with academic learning. These programs and services should be appropriate to the developmental stages of students and should also recognize and address the needs of students from diverse backgrounds.

Recommendation 6: Staff Diversity – Each local school system should develop a concerted plan of action to recruit, support, and retain a diverse teaching and administrative staff with representation throughout the system.

Recommendation 7: Staff Development – Local school systems should provide staff development on working with diverse populations for administrators, teachers, and other educational staff.

Recommendation 8: Teachers – Schools should carefully assign students to teachers.

Recommendation 9: Academic Growth – Local school systems should have in place a workable process to assist teachers, administrators, and support staff in learning to use available data in positive, diagnostic ways.

Recommendation 10: Academic Growth – Local school systems, in conjunction with MSDE, should provide for longitudinal measures of students' academic progress, rather than just relying on mean aggregate measures.

Recommendation 11: Academic Growth – Local school systems should set the goal, with necessary accountability mechanisms, that all students should make at least a year's worth of academic growth each year regardless of the starting point.

Recommendation 12: Academic Growth – Local school systems should ensure adequate communication between feeder and receiving schools to avoid excessive reteaching, since that is one of the biggest impediments to sustained academic growth as students change buildings.

Recommendations from
Minority Achievement in Maryland
at the Millennium, 2001

Recommendation: Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting

Despite obvious and very helpful advances in recent years in the availability of educational achievement data disaggregated by local school system, student ethnicity, sex, and free/reduced lunch eligibility, limitations in existing data and forms of reporting remain. To add value to existing state and local level efforts in this area, we recommend the appointment of a Superintendent's Task Force on Educational Data and Educational Indicator Statistics.

The Task Force will be charged with making recommendations for the further development of Maryland's infrastructure and capacity for monitoring, understanding, and reporting on the educational status of all of the state's students – including the educational progress of

ethnic/racial minority groups. The Task Force will make recommendations leading to the development of a comprehensive educational indicator system. This includes recommendations about (a) the kinds of data needed to measure educational progress of all groups of students, (b) the forms of periodic reporting of educational indicator information, ©) the nature of educational system input data required to assess instructional quality and equity – including (but not limited to) data about teacher and administrator supply and preparation, (d) the demographic and enrollment data – including projections – by race/ethnicity and economic status that reflect evolution in the nature of populations served by specific schools and school systems, and (e) arrangements or structures that will be required to appropriately analyze and report information on educational progress and the relation between school and school system programs and the achievement of all groups of students.

Recommendation: Outstanding Responsive Teachers

The AIMMS Steering Committee agrees with MSDE about the critical need to provide high quality teachers to all students. The Committee finds overwhelming evidence that effective teachers represent the most important predictor of a student's academic success. Unlike the findings reached in the mid-sixties that concluded that the predictors of student's academic success lay beyond the school in socioeconomic and related conditions (Coleman, et al. 1966), current and compelling research reaches quite different conclusions. In fact, this impressive research demonstrates that schools matter a great deal where student academic performance is concerned, and teacher quality matters most, especially for the most at risk students.

As stated within the Teacher Quality Section of this Report, the AIMMS Steering Committee spotlights a pattern of "segregation" that stands in bold defiance of the contemporary research findings. In fact, all too often schools with the highest rate of student poverty and large numbers of minority students have the greatest number of inexperienced and uncertified teachers. Also, good teachers have their greatest impact in schools lead by effective principals. With these points in mind, the following recommendations are offered:

- The K-16 Partnership must ensure that all teacher preparation programs include rigorous preparation of teachers with knowledge, skills, and demonstrated competencies to help all students meet/exceed state academic performance standards.

- MSDE and LSSs must improve incentives to enable the teaching profession to attract and retain highly dedicated and talented teachers and principals.

- MSDE, LSSs, and teacher organizations must effectively link public school teacher compensation, reward, and support systems to teaching assignment difficulty.

- LSSs must abandon the practice of assigning the least qualified teachers to the most challenging classroom situations.

- MSDE and LSSs must link teacher rewards to standardized gains in student achievement, as assessed by standard and non-standard measures.

- MSDE and higher education should complete implementation of Maryland's Redesign of Teacher Education, including the statewide expansion of Professional Development Schools.

Recommendation: Quality Professional Development for Educators

In addition to being educated in both content and pedagogy, as well as properly credentialed in courses they are teaching, teachers must have access to and participate in a well organized professional development system. The characteristics of a thorough system should include programs organized to continually expand teacher knowledge and sharpen their skills. Besides restructuring professional development activities, the conditions supporting professional development also will require change. Attention must be drawn to the need for adequate funding, length of school day and school year, availability of teacher assistance, and sustained central office follow-through to assist teachers to educate all students.

The Committee recognizes that MSDE maintains a statewide Regional Professional Development Network and is establishing a statewide Principals Academy Program. These represent two important implementation strategies to focus on the following professional development needs identified by the Steering Committee:

- Use of effective intervention strategies for students identified as not achieving at grade level.

- Use of teaching strategies that represent the best practices for cross-cultural instruction.

- Ability to deploy effective literacy programs for students from diverse backgrounds and learning needs.

- Creating a learning environment and school climate that helps ensure the academic achievement of all students, as outlined in the Maryland State Education That Is Multicultural Regulation.

Recommendation: Academic Intervention

Maryland's education standards and accountability system has been recognized as superior in the nation. This is an important achievement that energizes the state's comprehensive school reform initiative. Maryland's high academic standards at the elementary and middle schools, along with the soon to be implemented high school assessment program, represent the foundation of improved student performance and school accountability. Research shows that by requiring all students to participate in rigorous academic programs, the harmful practice of "ability tracking" is eliminated while significantly improving academic gains for students, regardless of socioeconomic conditions, race/ethnicity, or gender.

The Steering Committee also recognizes the under-representation of minority students in Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement programs as well as the potential for minority students to be misplaced in special education. Therefore, the Committee recommends that local school systems implement protocols and pre-referral processes in the assignment of these students, which take into account cultural factors that affect the evaluation and perception of their learning and performance.

Implementing rigorous academic requirements brings with it significant responsibilities for school systems and schools. Chief among these is the requirement to provide all students with appropriate help to meet the new standards. The AIMMS Steering Committee finds there is an insufficient program of early intervention and prevention statewide for students experiencing academic achievement problems. At the same time, the Steering Committee identifies that such a system is described in the 1999 publication, *Every Child Achieving: A Plan for Meeting the Needs of the Individual Learner*. Therefore, the Steering Committee urges full funding of the Plan, including each of its three components:

- Student Readiness – a statewide system of appropriate preschool support for children and families;

- Educator Capacity – an important investment in preservice and ongoing professional development of all teachers and school principals; and

- Academic Intervention – direct help for students not achieving proficiency levels from kindergarten through high school.

With full funding of the Plan and its appropriate implementation, every school and teacher will be provided needed resources and professional knowledge to assist each student in achieving high academic standards.